"Where there is no vision the people perish."

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CHANGING OUTLOOKS

MANY somewhat vaunting claims have been brought forward for Georgian poetry as opposed to or differing from the poetry of the past—not only of the near past, sneeringly and tediously termed "Victorian," but of all produced in the centuries behind us. But, amid all the chatter, one rather remarkable phase has been overlooked. This does not lie in the technique, or the lack of it, nor is it in the dictum of Ford Madox Hueffer, who declared "that poetry is no longer about country lanes, about the singing of birds," and, he added with American summariness, "not nowadays." A significant commentary on this is that, in Sir Henry Newbolt's selection of Georgian verse, *New Paths on Helicon* (Nelson and Sons) there are no fewer than one hundred pages all descriptive of country lanes, villages, grass, flowers and trees, and birds sing almost tiresomely. The Georgian poets have not therefore discarded rural matters; "not nowadays"—"it is not here that the chasm between the new and the old occurs. It lies in their attitude towards "Love o' Women." It is in this that the new poets reveal their estrangement from the older. Chinese poets in the dim past before Christ wrote of love, both tenderly and passionately; in Britain the singers' theme continually reverted to love; the eighteenth century poets also sang of love, although Crabbe and Cowper, in the later years of the century, reverted to country scenes. Wordsworth also reined in his pen to rural and religious subjects, but the bulk of the poets of the nineteenth century wrote frequently, and with varying passion, of women and love. Now, in Newbolt's selection, and it is a selection of the best, not one of the Georgian poets speak of love. Robert Nichols, indeed, asks if there had ever been love in his life; if there had been it is eclipsed entirely by his affection for his comrades in the field of battle; Humbert Wolfe has, it is true, an epilogue commencing, "I have sung of love," but this love might be in praise of an ideal, or a vision, or some ultimate perfection that bears no relation to a corporeal woman.

We do but state a fact; there is no desire to raise the question as to whether such a fact is an advantage or a

limitation. There it is, either women have lost the lure of sex in the gaining of political and professional equality, or men are too occupied with mechanical interests to notice whether " Jim " or " Phoebe " works beside them. Historians deduce their conclusions from the writings of the period; the effusions of Rousseau elucidated the commencement of the French Revolution ; what will future historians learn from this ignoring of love by the Georgian poets ?

Newbolt sums up in his Commentary those poets whose lines are included as growing on Helicon's paths. This Commentary is a trifle disappointing, for all appear to emerge from his slight examination with equal honours, save and except Alfred Noyes ; but this author has been so frequently gnawed at and worried angrily by big and little dogs alike that he must be well-nigh case-hardened, even to not minding Newbolt's damning conclusion on his verse, that " what is not delicate enough for one appetite may be God's plenty for another."

As if in protest to the *New Paths on Helicon* Mr. Norman Ault gives us his collection of *Seventeenth Century Lyrics* (Longmans). The long and loving labour with which these Lyrics, many of them quite unknown before, have been gathered together cannot be sufficiently praised ; the notes contain veritable mines of knowledge, and delight the scholar. Now these Lyrics celebrate, with comparatively few exceptions, love and love alone, from Milton's chaste and beautiful lines to his " late espousëd saint," to Davenant's charming song, " Awake, awake ! the morn will never rise Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes." (Can it be mere prejudice that makes these lines echo with beauty in our ears ?)

Even if we concede that a faint insincerity creeps into many of these seventeenth century lyrics ; are we compelled, therefore, to discard them and accept in their place a strict mental veracity about a dustbin or a decayed cabbage-leaf ? A lover beneath the trees and a man pouring out his religious emotions in verse are as true as the manure-heap in the farmyard. The sparkling, bubbling stream is as often to be seen as the greasy water in a kitchen sink ; it merely depends on the mind that looks for the one or

the other. We know of One who saw a God-stirred spirit in a poor wretch writhing on a gallow's tree. There was the true poet of all the world.

Now, *Poetry of To Day*, by Iolo Williams (Herbert Jenkins) is pleasant reading—therefore it seems ungracious to ask, "Is it critical?" "Does it shed fresh light on vexed questions?" We fear the answer must be in the negative; for instance, the author knew and admired Rupert Brooke and on that account he cannot break away from the beautiful friendship sufficiently to speak dispassionately, or critically, of Brooke's work. To say the truth, Iolo Williams' trumpet resembles a musical-box—it plays prettily but fails to arouse either hearty acquiescence, or healthy contradiction. He says, certainly, that he "fears" Carl Sandberg is writing something which has none of the "essentials of prose and few of the merits of poetry"; but such a timid judgment could be extended to include some English writers and not only Sandberg. He slightingly dismisses Francis Thompson and Mrs. Meynell—one as a writer of charming occasional poems and the other as "extravagant," although he admits that Thompson's verses in spite of "turgidity" were full of colour and sound. Now, in the future, Mrs. Meynell will be remembered more as the object of Thompson's noble adoration than ever she will be for her "charming occasional poems"—it is uncritical to bracket them together in the realm of their artistic work. Again, *Poetry of To Day* includes Robert Graves (who has four and a half pages devoted to him) and J. C. Squire, but omits entirely Lawrence Binyon and Humbert Wolfe. Is this because the author felt instinctively that the poetry of these two would inevitably dwarf the output of Messrs. Blundel, Shanks, and Graves? We hope so, but, in Iolo Williams' own phrase, we "fear" not. He, apparently, demands a simplicity in poetry that is perilously close to banality—witness his terming "*admirable*" Robert Graves' jingle of

> "The potman cannot well recall,
> The ostler never knew,
> Whether his day was Malplaquet,
> The Boyne, or Waterloo."

whereas there is no intelligent schoolboy who could not continue in this strain for hours. Then, also, the blank line of most pedestrian prose that lies in two stanzas by Squire—stanzas that Iolo Williams affirms that " they have a rich and many-coloured beauty," seem to escape him altogether,

" For whatever stream I stand by,
And whatever river I dream of,
There is something still at the back of my mind."

To be honest, there is a strong " something " at the back of our ear that declares this line to be prose, and bad prose at that.

In 1656 Robert Fletcher wrote on a dead friend; the whole poem is included in *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, we cull only these—

" Yet, while he blessed us with the rays
Of his short-continued days,
Each minute had its weight of worth,
Each pregnant hour some star brought forth.
So, while he travelled here beneath,
He lived when others only breathe."

This would not be " simple " enough for Iolo Williams; he quotes Lionel Johnson's lines :

"All that he came to give
He gave, and went away again :
I have seen one man live,
I have seen one man reign,
With all the graces in his train."

and here Lionel Johnson has, says Iolo Williams, " created strength out of simplicity." Yet we would point out that this straining after simplicity has allowed a seemingly absurd statement about this friend " with all the graces in his train," that he " went away again," which would imply that the graced individual had the power of disappearing and appearing again : it is a fault in workmanship.

Poetry of To Day concludes with a complacent remark that " we have a score of poets who have often written well." Could any pronouncement be more damning? Nothing we could say would equal the " Mene, Mene " of that, if we agree it would be to quote Arthur Baumann : " Quite so; we live among the Not-Quites and the Just-Nots."

With a grandiloquent title, *England Reclaimed*, and clad in a most obnoxious jacket, a volume of verse from another of the writers of *To Day*, Osbert Sitwell, yet more deeply emphasizes the gulf between the older poets and the new. *England Reclaimed* (Duckworth) announces itself as the first of a trilogy, and the author declares that he has " attempted to find what is, perhaps, a new medium—an imaginative and poetic portraiture." This portraiture is of the servants of a great house with " its hundred eyes," a perfectly legitimate subject, the only question is, is the treatment poetic? The fearsome penalty of venturing to differ from the Sitwells is to be termed one " of crowds of giggling, chic-cads "—we are not certain what a " chic-cad " may be; we brave, however, the Sitwellian adjective. Let it be conceded at once that here and there, in this volume, you light upon a poetic picture of nature,

> "—the evening cool,
> And a smell of musk
> Lingers by the pool,
> For the trembling fingers of the honeysuckle
> Wring out the blue and the dew-drenched dusk."

But from these rare touches of beauty you are hurried into colloquial prose descriptions of dependants, such as Mrs. Southern, who:

> " Harried and worried the girls if they tarried, and worried and flurried them till they scurried along. She was always, she said, catching them at it, loitering as if there was nothing to do."

Is this, written for the most part in free unrhymed lines, more than a chatty commentary on those compelled to earn their daily bread? or those twenty-five lines (with the singularly inept comparison of Darwin's massive statue " about to spring like Hermes ")—which are elaborated solely to liken Luke Kembley's hair to that of the " portion of the skin, a patch of orange hair," " the peculiarly personal property of the Giant Sloth "; or Mrs. Hague's " Monday was Washing Day, Tuesday was Baking Day, Wednesday h' Alfred 'as 'is dinner h'early," and so on and so on. So might Fanny Burney have written amusingly to her family, but we doubt if she would call such comments " poetry." The whole concludes with a seemingly

perspiring crowd of these rustics at a flower show, and a repetition of each peculiarity of the various characters. We smile, but not one touches a deeper chord than tolerant amusement, save only Phoebe Southern, whose little tragedy goes flat in her mother's " dusting just the same." The Dedication is to Edith Sitwell, whose fingers, her brother declares, " have fashioned New Instruments of beauty, and have found New Indias of modern sense and sound." But, in view of the fact that Edith Sitwell, the feminine Charley Chaplin of poetry, has announced publicly that these " new Indias " were but experiments on her part and that she intends returning to classic work; what becomes of this praise? So late as 1927 she published a volume in which such " new instruments of beauty " as this appeared,

> "Where at dawn in the box of the sailor
> Blue as the decks of the sea,
> Nelson awoke, crowed like the cocks,
> Then back to dust sank he."

also,

> "And the mountain streams
> Like cowbells sound
> Tirra lirra, drowned
> In the waiter's dreams."

Let all thanks be given that these unmeaning and hideous jungles are to be abandoned, but we confess to a sneaking kindness for Gertrude Stein, who, at least, has had the perseverance of publishing lines no one would make head or tail of for twenty years—she has had the courage of pouring out her inscrutable rubbish and gives no sign of a sudden *volte face*. There is no doubt but that the Georgian poets have succeeded in bringing a somewhat riotous life into the realm of verse. As in the realm of painting the impressionists discovered some new values; if any art is to be vital it must, of necessity, leave old models behind it; but, in many instances, those who break away with loud clamour from what has become classic work, would do well to remember the French artist's advice to a pupil, who declared that she must " express " herself, that, he rejoined sternly, is only interesting " à votre mamman." Self-expression is of small value to the world, the elder poets

aimed at "world expression." Shakespeare told us nothing of himself, but all he said of men and women and of Nature remain true for us to-day. It may be that a babble of unmeaning lines do fitly express some minds, but the reading public has a right to object to these mind-phases being thrust upon its notice. Such manifestations should be decently hidden in obscurity, or submitted to a psycho-analyst.

ARTHUR HOOD.

THE LONELY HUNTER SINGS HIS DIS-ILLUSIONMENT.

IS *no* dream true?
Is all this flaming wonderment of June,
And children's laughter, like a happy tune,
And little joyous hopes about to-morrow,
Are these but woven in a cloak to hide
The hag called Life?

The rose of dawn that blossoms after sorrow,
The holy peace of silence after strife,
The precious hope that nought of good has died,—
Are these illusions too?

Ah God be pitiful, and let me hold
Some sweet illusion still,
Some tender memory warm within my breast;
Let earth be kind, and spill her faery gold,
And gay broom blossoms go dancing down the hill:

Ah let the grass grow green about my path,
And colour paint the west
Where trees in splendour stand against the skies,
That I may raise mine eyes,
And thus, head high, pass through the aftermath.

BARBARA E. SMYTHE.

THE PRISONER

John Bunyan 1675

1628—1928

MEN thought to hold him by a chain,
—Did they not dread his dream
Might trouble all the drowsy plain
Beside still Ouse's stream?

They moved him to the river cell
On Bedford Bridge midway,
Said he might rot before he tell
Of heaven his lawless way.

But gazing through his window high,
Quartered by cross-wise bars,
That framed a miniature of sky
Burnished by light and stars,

He wandered to the distant hills
Delectable and fair
Above the river-mist that stills
All cattle lowing there;

And meditating as he turned
Back to his willows' green
Within his dreamer's heart there burned
The way that he had been:

He saw House Beautiful afar
Where the rough byways end,
And when Despair shot bolt and bar
Took Faithful for his friend;

And soothed and blessed both day and night
By waters' ceaseless song,
In Christian's lone, immortal fight
Forgot men did him wrong.

A. D. L. WILSON.

THE YOUNGER AUSTRALIAN POETS

ALTHOUGH Australia is a newly-settled country, and one possessing scenically many unique characteristics in regard to scenery and the life of the people, there is a surprising disinclination among our poets to concern themselves with actualities, but rather a preference to cultivate individual literary styles, based, it must be confessed, on British standards.

For a period the mining, cattle-breeding, and timber-felling of the pioneers made a very strong appeal, not only to a number of poets, but to a large section of the community, who responded readily to the "bush ballads" and "galloping rhymes" of Adam Lindsay Gordon, "Banjo" Patterson, Will H. Ogilvie, Henry Lawson, and others. Very characteristic of one phase of Australian life were the volumes published in those days, the second half of the century, but our writers are too cultured in these days, and too proud of their culture to descend to that level. Though a joyous people, of humorous poets there have been few and only one, C. J. Dennis, author of *The Sentimental Bloke*, is writing to-day.

The outstanding figures in verse-writing of the present generation—which includes those of sixty years of age who are still writing—are Bernard O'Dowd, our uncrowned Poet Laureate, Christopher Brennan, Hugh McCrae, William Blocksidge, E. J. Rupert Atkinson, Leslie H. Allen, Mary Gilmore, Nance Palmer, Enid Derham, Louis Esson, Marie E. J. Pitt, McKee Wright, Roderic Quinn, Mary E. Fullerton, E. J. Brady, Zora Cross, Ruth M. Bedford, Louis Lavater, who have probably written their best work, and some already silent. Most of these have written admirable poetry, not always very distinctly national, but much that is destined to live as the most vital literary work done in this country.

At the head as a craftsman of the younger poets is "Furnley Maurice" (Frank Wilmot), who has to his credit such outstanding epical poems as "To God, from the Weary Nations," and "The Gully," works of undoubted genius, but his poetry has not the lyric singing quality or the human sympathy of the beautiful work of John Shaw Neilson. who is perhaps the most popular of our living

poets, his lyrics having an appeal of tenderness that is very potent among the women, who are (much more than the men) the supporters of culture in this country. His work is feminine, very delicate and sensitive. He is best known for his poems of people, "Branny Sullivan," "Old Nell Dickerson," "The Eyes of Little Charlotte," because of their pathetic appeal, and the same tender sympathy is shown in the poem I quote, recently published—

TO A LODGING-HOUSE CANARY

In you are all the good jigs of the Irishman out for a day,
Little one! close to the Maker you whistle away

Prisoned, and born in a prison, and yet in your song
Out to the top o' the twilight you take us along.

The goodman has need of sweet noises: he calls to his dame:
And she, being barren, she knows but the edge of the flame.

You dance into heaven, O rude one!—and higher and higher
You mock at the craven who eats not his fill o' the fire.

Free men we are not: we cannot come out of the fear;
Call the dead! Let the dead march in your merriment there!

Soldier you are, and good neighbour: you come not to cry
Of any dull ache in the body or doubt in the sky.

In you are all the good jigs of old Irishmen out for a day,
Little one! close to the Maker you whistle away.

Lyrical also in a higher degree are two women poets, Elsie Cole and Myra Norris, the latter exuberantly youthful in manner and outlook, the former more mature. Both delight in the fantastic, Elsie Cole (Mrs. A. H. Angel), being more concerned with the abstract, Miss Morris, being rather an observer. Only in this spirit of fantasy and in literary facility have these two poets any kinship; Elsie Cole is contemplative, Myra Morris inquisitive. There is something Pan-like in the former's understanding of Nature, and, like Pan, she has music in her soul. Australia calls to her with a more potent voice than to others of the present generation, as shown in this picture of our Bush:

MAY NIGHT

The ebon moments, cold of wing,
For multitudinous blossoming,
  A dust of finest water-seed bestrew,
That dawn may draw from trembling buds of crystal
  Miracle flowers of dew.

So late! So black! Yet all the bush
With chirp and dart and blunt-nosed push,
  With stir of busy to-and-fro is rife;
The forest folk play in a sweet absorption
  The rigorous game of life.

And even as terrific day
In flames of golden disarray
  Brightens to glory of a heaven-wide birth,
The little pink and white soft-fisted mushrooms
  Reach up, and break the earth!

Miss Morris is Ariel, dashing about on land and sea impetuously, observing shrewdly and finding much to amuse her and sometimes to shudder at; but it is the enjoyed shudder of the youthful spirit. Luminosity of phrase is one of her charms: dainty, quaint, always revealing. I quote one of her latest poems, which is characteristic of one of her moods—

THE HOUSE WITH THE DEAD

The woman in the house next door is dead!
And I cannot forget it if I would!
Each thing to-night holds dread significance,
The cat slinks by the wall, its eyes a-slant;
The trees lean close together, gibbering,
And whisper, sibilant and shy: "Oh, she
Is dead—is dead! Poor woman-thing is dead!
Her hair made rills of honey-gold, that now
Is plastered back and hid! Her leaden eyes
Were once like yours, the home of lazy love
And laughter!" And the cynical, sad wind
Whoops past, and lifts my curtains, looking in,
And wailing: "Oooooh! But she's dead, is dead."
The wind weeps suddenly, and I weep too!
I draw the silken curtains close and close
Around the panes. (Ah, God! Could I forget!)
This only can I see—long dwindling rows
Of yellow candles, their fat bodies all
A-shake with laughter, and between, a face,
Lead-grey, and terrible and old! . . . And then—
I want to scream, because the face is mine!

Dorothea Mackellar is also of this company, and may be said to dominate it by her always satisfying artistry. She joins it by virtue of her feminity, her delicacy and sympathy, but is more literary-minded than either of these; as a literary artist she is very various, painting admirably (the painter analogy is specially appropriate in her case, for she uses flowing colours, with delicate touches), and observing subtly, taking many subjects and objects for her themes. Miss Mackellar gives one the idea of working deliberately rather than by the urge of sudden inspiration, feeling sincerely, but not very poignantly; her thoughts may often be wistful, but with the wistfulness of a hopeful and grateful spirit. She has a gift for felicitous expression, and a sense of music, but her music is, as it were, heard at a distance, quiet but haunting and a little elusive. This poem out of her new volume is typical of her art, and local in subject:

SPRING SONG OF SYDNEY

Spring has come back to this Sydney of ours;
All the deep gardens brim over with flowers;
All the steep gardens climb down to the harbour
Frothing with blossom on trellis and arbour.
Clematis, jasmine, wistaria, rose,
Who can keep tale of the pageant that goes
Scented and hued like the suite of a bride
Towards the delphinium-blue of the tide?

Hark to the magpie there! and in the hush
Now the sun's riding high—listen, a thrush!
Soon, soon the locust will silence their song,
Spring is swift-footed but Summer broods long.

It is apparent that most of the younger poets are feminine, for while one must at least mention such excellent writers as Leslie H. Allen, Louis Lavater, Mary C. Fullerton, Christopher Brennan, Frederick T. Macartney, Hugh McCrae, Vance and Nettie Palmer, Louis Esson—all surviving, and a few years ago, the best and most representative of our poets of literary leaning, only the first two are now publishing new work. There are, of course, others, but my concern just now, is rather with the new

voices, of whom there are, it must be confessed, but few. E. M. England (Mrs. Bertie) is one of our newer poets, and has just published her first volume. It contains much skilfully-written verse, which is excellent in lyric expression, and full of observation and thoughtfulness, but she works on a small canvas though her subjects are chosen from various sources, some even inspired by travels abroad, as is the case sometimes with Miss Mackellar. But let L. M. England speak for herself on an Australian topic :

QUEENSLAND NIGHT

Slowly the hours, with their star-dusted hair,
Trail past the red-faced and broad-bosomed moon,
There is a healthy glamour everywhere,
A bright effulgence, like a second moon ;
Drugged with the silence and the pure, sweet air,
Blue lilies sleep upon the broad lagoon.

Drowsing night-long, fat cattle in the shade,
(The slate-grey shade of Daytime-Dusty trees)
Loll in the grass—tall, sunburnt, and wind-swayed,
That ripples like lake-waters to my knees ;
Curlews' shrill calling down the dim arcade
Of moon-flecked scrubland, floats upon the breeze.

The black strand of the creek winds o'er the plain—
A velvet bow in tresses long grown grey ;
I clutch at thought that still eludes my brain,
I strive for speech—and find no words to say !
For so intense a beauty breathes of pain,
Like wistful music heard from far away !

I know there are green English fields, that sleep
In quiet beauty thro' the long twilight,
And scented Eastern darkness e'er will keep
A jewelled snare for passion and delight,
But glory and romance and magic leap
Out of the torquoise bowl of Queensland night !

Anyone who has lived in Queensland, even in the milder southern regions, will recognize it and its spirit. If, indeed, our poets painted more pictures of their immediate surroundings our literature would be that much the richer. Let Europeans describe their own countries ; but many of

our poets pride themselves on their internationalism and are scornful of mere provincialism, oblivious of the fact that literature should bear its own native colour.

One does not find many really new voices among Australian poets nowadays. Except for a brief spurt with a " revolutionary " magazine of verse which they called *Vision* and which was to be very up-to-date but was manifestly inspired by the English " Yellow Book " School of last century, written mostly and published by Jack Lindsay (aided and abetted by his artist father, Norman Lindsay, Australia's Dionysus) and Kenneth Slessors, all our poets allow themselves nowadays in the way of freedom is the use of free verse. In this medium Llywelyn Lucas is expert. Her poems are whimsical in expression and deft in workmanship, but rather trivial in idea. From the point of view of sheer inventiveness much of her work is interesting, with its neatly-turned phrases and quaint exclamations. When Miss Lucas went from Victoria recently to live in Brisbane (Queensland) the sub-tropical conditions intrigued her and she wrote a prophetic poem, from which I quote the latter part, as characteristic of her style in free verse :

A DREAM OF BRISBANE

Some day there will be
Domes and gay balconies,
Fluttering silk,
And musical laughter,
And *bells !*
Some day there will be
Tall spires !
Fountains !
Gardens !

Groves of the scarlet—
fingered poinsettia
tearing the air
And leaving it bleeding,
Till the angels stoop down
and with pale pearly fingers
heal them,
and leave us,
the mauve jacaranda . . .

And butterflies ! . . .
Hundreds and thousands of butterflies,
Filling the streets and the skies and the steeples—
Turquoise and olivine,
Purple and ebony
(Fragments of *colour*,
of *form*,
and of *harmony*
flung on the wind. . . .)
. . . Catch, catch ! Mortal fingers ! . . .

And there will be
grey, mellow bridges,
Where water-gods laugh,
And boats from the shadows
go gliding . . .
go gliding . . .
With lovers still pressing—
Hot-handed,
Hot-bodied. . . .

. . . . .

I *know*,
For one moment the tall stranger City
Hid in the shadows with Time the Seducer,
And Romance followed after them,
pointing his finger . . .

(And I,
tip-a-toe . . .
. . . marvelling . . . marvelling . . .)

Another of the younger poets of Australia from whom we may hope for some excellent work in the near future, for his brief past is full of promise, is Robert D. Fitzgerald, who has put out this year a modestly small collection of thoughtful verse; but there are others, Winifred Shaw, Linda Phillips, Violet Townsend, A. B. Crowther, Kathleen Brown, Maud R. Lisbon, Alan Gross, Kathleen Dalziel, Alice M. Lapthorne (all but one, be it noted, feminine), and others by no means negligible among the new writers; from these the best is yet to come. But none of these are greatly interested in the great outstanding influences which are vital to our progress as a nation. We are building up our country with abundant energy and enterprise and, materially, we are advancing rapidly, but in the arts and

literature we are not showing any great imagination or originality. We have not realized the true meaning of Emerson's dictum that "when the poet sings the world listens with the assurance that a secret of God is to be spoken." Yet Australia, with its high achievement as an outpost of civilization, has boundless possibilities and already many secrets well worth revealing.

Melbourne. EDWARD A. VIDLER.

"MADE ABSOLUTE"

THE cords are sundered and the lute
Will speak no more, but in its mute
Appeal, more piercing than a tongue
Of fire, or rending cry, heart-wrung,
From pallid lips to starless sky,
There lies a haunting poignancy.

Perhaps the strings too weak were made
That thus the strands so badly frayed?
Perhaps the keys too tight were strained?
Perchance the hand—But what were gained
To know? . . . now doomed each night to see
The pillowed ghost of memory.

G. W. EUSTACE.

AGE

AGE alters—and that ruthless robber time
Strips us of everything we once possessed—
Strength, beauty, competence, endurance, zest,
Emprise and intellect and love sublime.
Age but recalls the splendours of the prime,
The years of youth unutterably blest,
When friendship smiled and favouring fates caressed,
And fearless feet essayed the adventurous climb—
Recalls, but not recovers; nevermore
That puissant period—weak and weary grown,
Age sees the final rifling of its store;
And, like a pauper to the poor-house, lone,
With trembling feet and timourous, finds the door
That opens darkly on the great unknown.

W. S. GODFREY.

SCOTS POETRY: MODERN TENDENCIES

WITHIN recent years an unmistakable outcry has arisen in Scotland for the revival and preservation of the vernacular. To many Scotsmen it is apparent that with the spread of a systematized education the old tongue of the Lowlands and of Scotland outside the Gaelic belt, already no longer used by Scottish prose writers, is in danger of extinction. In the cities the Doric is rapidly becoming a speech of the past, save where it persists in a debased form in certain districts or among families who still use it in an intimate way in the privacy of their own homes. But there is one stronghold to which the vernacular still clings. That stronghold is verse, and in verse the vernacular is still "class"; nay, it is more than "class": it is classical.

In England, where there are so many local dialects, there is a widespread belief, even among educated people, that the tongue of Burns is only one of many variations upon standard English. That, of course, is not the case, and philological theories have been advanced to show that many Scottish words, having English counterparts, though possibly derived by Scotland from the same original source, were derived by entirely different channels. Nor is the tongue of Burns the whole Doric.

Those who have raised the outcry that the vernacular is in danger belong to two distinct types. In the first place, there are those who are alarmed lest the future generation in Scotland grow up in ignorance of the heritage which Burns left his country. As far as they are concerned there the matter rests, for to them Burns is the Alpha and Omega of Scottish literature. The other champions of the vernacular cause go farther. They know that there was a reason why the vernacular declined, and they find the seeds of its decay in Burns himself and in the host of imitators who followed him. To them, fine as the songs of Burns are, Burns was a rustic, following rustic models and morals rather than the high themes and phrasings of classical Scots. They demand that the achievements of Scots poetry shall be viewed in the right perspective.

With this clue to the position of Scottish poetry to-day, one may take up the Broadsheets of the Porpoise Press, Edinburgh, which very roundly reflect the output of the present generation of Scottish poets, and see in detail the forces which are at work in modern Scots poetry. The twenty-four issues before us are mainly confined to Scottish writers and almost wholly devoted to verse. They represent no coterie or clique; they are eloquent of general tendencies. They are, mark carefully, all concerned with living writers.

When one turns to the work of Professor Alexander Gray, whose ability to command the Doric was perfectly evident in his Scottish versions from Heine, and finds the issue for which he is responsible completely filled with poems in English, one doubts whether excellence in the one medium is incompatible with excellence in the other. It had been almost a commonplace of criticism that no Scots poet could hope equally to succeed in Scots and in English, and of this Burns was held up as the classic example. To-day Scottish poets—the best of them—are bilingual to a degree which it would have been hard to parallel not many years ago.

When Professor Gray, in a whimsical poem *On a Cat, Ageing*, writes :

> Life will go on for ever,
> With all that cat can wish :
> Warmth and the glad procession
> Of fish and milk and fish.
>
> Only—the thought disturbs him—
> He's noticed once or twice,
> The times are somehow breeding
> A nimbler race of mice.

—when he writes like that he becomes the fellow of the Georgians. When Mr. Alexander Mackenzie Davidson, in one of those two-stanza poems of his for which he has now become well-known, writes :—

> Be not afraid of change
> More than the baby rose
> Fears on the day it blows
> To find the garden strange.

he appeals not only to a Scottish audience but to an English one as well.

Like Mr. Davidson, Mr. William Jeffrey relies upon English, and his contribution to the three series includes the long, idyllic poem, *The Nymph*, published as a separate Broadsheet, and *The Lamb of Lomond*, a collection of shorter poems which explains in some degree the title which has been bestowed upon him of "Glasgow's Blake." Mr. Robert Crawford, the miner poet, is also represented by a poem in English, though he can write good, racy Scots. But the philosophic ruggedness of his English verse is unmistakably Scottish.

It is when we turn to the Broadsheets of Mrs. Violet Jacob and of Mr. Alasdair Alpin MacGregor that we find the poetry which many will consider most typical of modern Scotland—not of the Scotland in the making, but of the later Scottish tradition. Most of Mrs. Jacob's Broadsheet is taken up by a poem in English, but *Rohallion* touches, perhaps, the highwater-mark of Mrs. Jacob's achievement in the Doric. Though it is musical, it is full of the rugged and slightly rude forcefulness which has always been characteristic of much Scottish verse—a forcefulness which marks the Broadsheets of two of the originators of the Porpoise Press—the satiric *Annus Mirabilis* of Mr. R. Watson Kerr and the *Epistle* of Mr. George Thomson. Mr. MacGregor, on the other hand, in his *Hebridean Sea Pieces* develops the Celtic tradition.

Somewhere between the poetry of traditionalism and the poetry of the revivalists comes Mr. William Ogilvie, poet, artist, and architect, who contributes to the first and third series of Broadsheets and whose imaginative designs for Mr. Walter de la Mare's Broadsheet, *Thus Her Tale*, are a feature of the first series. Mr. Ogilvie is original without being unnatural. That he has a decided *flair* for the eerie in real life his modern ballad, *Straught, Straught's a Reed*, proves; that he has fancy is evident from *The Witch* and from *My Mither's Aunt* —the respective title poems of his two Broadsheets. How he uses the Doric to obtain an atmosphere of suspense may be seen from a brief quotation:

Noo I'm in an empty hoose,
Gangin' my lane frae room tae room ;
An' a' the wa's are strippit bare,
An' a' the presses toom.
The flair boards fu' o' dusty cracks
An' bits o' claith an' rusty tacks ;
An' whaur a picter used tae hing,
A shadow frae a shadow string,
Glowerin' like nae livin' thing.

It is with the Broadsheets of Mr. Hugh M'Diarmid and of Mr. Lewis Spence that one arrives at all that is most challenging in Scottish poetry to-day. *The Lucky Bag* contains sixteen examples of Mr. M'Diarmid's work, and if a gentle introduction to the style which Mr. M'Diarmid has evolved be needed, here it is. As a deliberate attempt to fuse Scots into a new shape, Mr. M'Diarmid's work has roused keen controversy.

Mr. Spence's achievement in these last few years has been of a different kind. Not long ago, Mr. William Power called attention to the fact that Mr. Spence had " shown that the Doric was suitable for grave and lofty themes." Some of Mr. Spence's poems in English are already known to readers of THE POETRY REVIEW—though not *The Phœnix*, that surprisingly rich and melodious poem with which his Broadsheet of that title opens. But it is his Scots poems which command our attention here, and there can be no possible doubt that with the writing of *The Gray Etin* and *The Prows o' Reekie*, Scottish poetry regained something of its lost dignity. In another Broadsheet, *Weirds and Vanities*, will be found *The Camstairie*, a poem which plainly expresses the objective toward which Mr. Spence has lately been pressing. The concluding lines of the poem are as follow :

But list noo, ye loons
  Wha canna bide oor tunes,
And a' the whigmaleerie thochts
  We bring the warld as boons :

Whaur ye see cloud
  We see land,
Whaur ye see goud
  We see sand,

Whaur ye see east
We see wast,
That ye see neist
We see past.

Those lines sum up a tendency which has tremendous possibilities. It will be interesting to see how far Scots verse unlearns itself and submits to the influence of its remoter past, both in spirit and in form.

CHARLES GRAVES.

WILL WADMAN

THE stern hills sired thee,
And gave you of their strength.
The free downs nurtured thee,
And made you free ;
Untrammelled spaces opened wide their arms
To draw you close ; their secrets to unfold :
Wise nature's lore, her age-old mysteries
Of night and day, or skies and flowers and trees :
And you found beauty, when alone with God,
In the clean furrows of the fresh-turned sod.
In God's own image made He man,
And you : Will Wadman, yeoman farmer's son.

* * *

Oft have I lain, upon the silent downs
And watched you, with your team
Of gert brown horses : the only sounds,
The shifting of harness and the drone of humble bees.
Watched too the quick gleam,
Of the ploughshares, as you swung around,
Leaving behind you the long, clean furrow
Of sweet-smelling earth.
Watched the grey gulls,
In the blue dome of the summer sky,
Wheeling high, above your head,
Or following in your wake, with solitary cry :
Denizens they, of the waste places and desolate shores.
Sometimes at noon you spread yourself to rest,
Beside me, 'neath the oak tree's shade,

And we have talked of many things :
Lands I had travelled, books that you held dear,
And in the deep silences that lay between our words,
Our souls grew very near.

* * *

Since then so many springs have come and gone ;
I still can lie beneath that self-same oak,
And watch the long, brown furrows grow,
Beneath another's hand,
And hear a stranger's voice call to your team.
Thy voice shouted its last gay challenge
To the grim God War
And broke in everlasting silence to the answering guns.
Far, far away, beneath an alien sky,
Thy viking limbs lie stretched :
No Sussex soil covers your proud, heroic head.
Sadly, they tell me " Auld Wadman's lad be dead."
So be it—but to me, my friend, you live,
More beautiful in body than of yore ;
With limbs more nobly turned,
Endowed with keener energies, and more manly strength.
Care free and joyous as in days that used to be ;
You plough straight furrows still,
And call to me.

* * *

In God's own image made He man
And you, Will Wadman, yeoman farmer's son.

M. FORBES MYERS.

THE KNIGHT TO HIS LOST LADY

THE sun that changes my shield to gold
With the light from his burnished face
Will shed for me wherever I ride
Only your radiant grace.

The moon, like a maid who has wandered away
From her sheltering nunnery walls,
Steals from a cloud, and over my soul
The cloak of your chastity falls.

NOËL ALLPORT.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—V

TERTSETIS.—LASCARATOS.—TYPALDOS.—VALAORITIS.

WE have seen how regenerated Athens acquired a poetical dilettantism from Constantinople through the Phanariote Soutso brothers and how the Phanariote and archæologist Alexander Rangabé continued, in addition to his many other books, to publish volumes of verses in rich rhyme.

In the meantime, in the Ionian islands round Solomos, who was adored like a saint, a new poetical school sprang up, cultivating poetry with almost religious devotion. Most of the poets were well-to-do and noble men and gained a thorough hold of the poetical art from their master.

It goes without saying that all of them according to the master's example, not only used the popular language, but also strongly defended it against the criticisms of Rangabé and his followers. Their essays show how well they were acquainted with the modern science of language. The Ionian Academy had excellent Greek professors, familiar with philosophy and art. But most of the Ionians knew Italian and were personal friends with the best Italian poets of their time. For Solomos had a close friend, the Dalmatian Niccolò Tommaseo, who, after publishing and translating many folk songs, wrote the *Scintille*, in which he exhorted Greeks to use the language of the people. Typaldos was a familiar of Alessandro Manzoni, who found the demotic very harmonious. Thus the demotic language and the folk songs were the poetical gospel of the Ionian poets.

A second characteristic feature of these poets connected with the first was a love, not for classical Greece, but rather for Christian Greece. Ionian historians like Zampelios, Sathas, and Romanos studied mediaeval and modern Greek history and emphasized the resistance of the Greek people to their Occidental and Turkish oppressors.

This attitude was part of the strong orthodox feeling of the islanders. They bitterly hated the Roman Catholic Church because of Papal arrogance and Venetian insolence. On the other hand, they were very much attached to their own saints—St. Dionysius in Zante, St. Gerasimus in

Cephalonia, St. Spyridion in Corfu. Thus after the liberation of Greece they formed also a political ideal. Following her struggle with anxiety regarding her victory as a triumph of their Church against the infidels, they imagined her as an ideal mother covered with wounds. Solomos's Anthem was so stirring. This sentiment is the origin of their efforts for union with the small kingdom—noble efforts to which Great Britain responded with a still nobler gesture.

Now we are going to deal with four Ionian poets, one Zantiote, two Cephalonians, and one Leucadian. About Marcoras and two other Corfiotes we will speak in other articles. The first two will not keep us long. George Tertsetis, who was born in 1800 in Zante, after studying law in Padova, hastened to take part in the Greek revolution. But, incapable of fighting, he became a teacher of French in Nauplia and, afterwards, under the Bavarian regents, a judge. As a judge he displayed a splendid honesty in opposing the condemnation of Colocotronis for conspiracy against King Otho. After the promulgation of the Constitution in 1844 he was appointed librarian to the Chamber of Deputies and held his office for thirty years up to his death. Thus Tertsetis became Athenian without losing his Ionian features.

Considering Solomos's *Hymn to Liberty* as the song of songs, he always remained a partisan of the popular language and did not condescend to exchange it even for the poetical wrath of the Rally competition in 1853, '54, and '56. In the first competition he presented a poem on an ancient subject, *Corinna and Pindar*, in which he expounded Pausanias's story that Corinna vanquished her rival poet by using her own Bœotian dialect. But Tertsetis, a true Christian, did not forget also Jesus within this archaic poem. In the epilogue he exhorts Athens to study the divine Gospel.

Also in his other extensive poem, *Οἱ Γάμοι τοῦ Μεγάλου Ἀλεξάνδρου* (The Marriage of Alexander the Great) he represents the King, who claimed to be the son of Zeus, as seeing St. John the divine in his dream, and dying after making the sign of the Cross! But his love for Greece inspires him with some good verses, simple and sincere.

Ἑλλάδα μου πατρίδα μου, ὦ τάφε τῶν γονεῶν μου
Ὦ καλὴ γῆ ποῦ γεύτηκά πρώτη φορὰ τὸν ἥλιο
Κ' εἶδα τἀστέρια τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ τὴ γλυκειὰ σελήνη
Κ' ἤκουσα τὰ λαλούμενα στὸ ἥσυχο ἀκρογιάλι
Κ' εἶδα κοράσια στὸ χορὸ καὶ νέαις πανδρεμέναις
Καὶ τὸ φεγγάρι τὰ ξανθὰ μαλλιά τους νὰ φωτίζῃ . . .
Καλὴ πατρίδα μ' ἄκουσε νεώτατο τραγοῦδι.

("O my Greece, my fatherland, the grave of my parents; O my fair land, where for the first time I tasted sunshine and saw the stars of the night and the sweet moon and heard the musical instruments from the quiet beach, and saw maidens and married young women dancing, while moonshine was glittering over their auburn hairs. . . . O my beautiful fatherland, listen to a song quite new. . . .")

Andrew Lascaratos of Cephalonia, a man *sui generis*, tried to restrain the excesses of religious sentiment and the intemperance of the clergy, attacking them in Cephalonian dialect. Born in 1811, he belonged to the aristocracy of Cephalonia, and was a child in 1823, when Lord Byron, coming to recruit Souliote volunteers for Missolonghi, visited their home.

Lascaratos also studied law in Corfu and Padova and tried pleading in Cephalonia. There he pretended not to understand Italian, which then was the official language of the law courts, in order to show the necessity of introducing Greek. When he was appointed a judge he drew up one of his judgments in verse. Afterwards he began to scoff at the clergy as a rationalist rather than an atheist, and in 1856 he published the *Mysteries of Cephalonia*, a social satire in prose. Then the clergy launched an excommunication and the author became so unpopular that he fled from his island and came to London. The book, however, made him notorious throughout Greece, and by it he will survive as an eccentric humorist. On his return after three years he published a small journal, Λύχνος ("The Lamp") against demagogues. Satire, he said, is a razor; but it seems that he did not use it adroitly and cut himself as well as many others. In his old age he confessed that he never was a poet, but a versifier. "I had no inventive power," he said. After admiring such a genuine sincerity, one must also

confess that sometimes Lascaratos succeeded in parodies. The parody of the I rapsody of the *Iliad*, in which Achilles, speaking in pure Cephalonian, calls Agamemnon "a Jesuite and a freemason," is very amusing.

His fellow-citizen, Julius Typaldos, three years his junior, was his opposite, and a typical Ionian gentleman. His family had been in Cephalonia since 1408; but his mother was an Italian countess and poetess, Tereza Ringetti. She accompanied him to Verona, for his education. He became a doctor of law at Pisa, and in 1839 was appointed a judge in Cephalonia, afterwards in Corfu and Zante, until the Union of the island with Greece. On 1867 he went to live in Florence and returned to Corfu only to die in 1883.

Typaldos was the greatest admirer of Solomos whom he heard many times reciting his verse. Considering him as equal to Dante, he dedicated to him his only book of verse, which he published in Zante in 1856. It contained fourteen *Διάφορα ποιήματα* (various poems). Afterwards he wrote some essays on law and occasionally some poems in periodicals. In Florence he busied himself with an excellent translation of Tasso's *Jerusalemme liberta* and other poems which are still in manuscript. But, in 1916, a very good collection was published with a fine biography by M. Siguros, and in 1917 an enthusiastic appreciation by Costis Palamas appeared.

The chief feature of Typaldos is his devotion to religion and mysticism, still deeper than that of Solomos. The fine Byzantine art of the churches of Zante and the primitive painters of Italy must have impressed him. His heroes see visions; even his Rigas, whose name he does not mention, kneels before the Holy Virgin. The *Child*, whom Charon takes away in his arms, sees myriads of colours, listens to a chorus of angels, and at last becomes a little angel himself. The Angels of Life and Death meet each other in the chamber of a newly married pair.

Even Nature for Typaldos is a mystery. He likes to describe nights illumined by moonlight, but not clear moonlight, and dreams and desires rising like mist to the stars.' *Η Φυγὴ* ("The Departure") which he wrote upon leaving the island with his future wife—who deserted her

first husband for his sake—is a description of a nocturnal calm at sea and of secret love sentiments.

Προβαίνει τὸ φεγγάρι / κρυφὴ παρηγοριὰ
Νὰ φέρ' εἰς μύρια πάθη, / ἀγνώριστα, κρυφὰ
Κ' οἱ δυὸ μακρυὰ στὰ ξένα / τὸ κύταζαν μαζὶ
Κ' εἶχαν στὴν ἀγκαλιά τους / παράδεισο καὶ γῆ.

("The moon is proceeding along to bring sweet comfort in countless, unknown, and secret pains. . . . They both were looking at it together, far away in the foreign land, thus embracing in their arms both paradise and earth.")

Equal to that is another poem, *Τὸ πλάσμα τῆς Φαντασίας* ("The Creature of Fancy"), an imitation of Regaldi, in which he speaks with a dream girl, whom he seeks everywhere, but never meets.

Typaldos's verse has been compared to crystal for its purity; but it also has crystal-sound. His mother had early taught his ear rhythm. Perhaps sometimes he is too sweet. Indeed, all his poetry is somewhat effeminate; it seems like a passionate serenade.

A type thoroughly manly and Greek, a poet who used poetry as a whole band, was the Leucadian Aristotle Valaoritis. Valaoritis is the only modern Green poet whose detailed biography has been published (by his son) and he really deserves such an honour.

The poet who was to sing the praises of the *ἁρματωλοὶ* (armed men) was himself a descendant of *ἁρματωλοὶ* of Eurytania, who distinguished themselves in the seventeenth century during a revolt against the Turks and after its failure found refuge in Leucas. This island, after a very brief occupation by the Turks, was re-conquered by the Venetians in 1716. Thus politically it became a part of the Ionian state, although geographically it belongs rather to continental Greece.

The poet's grandfather was recognized as a noble by the Government and sent his sons to be educated in Italy and France. His father John became a very rich man and was a senator of Leucas in the Ionian Parliament up to his death

in 1856. The father was rather conservative in his policy and was disappointed at seeing his son extremely radical in all his views. The poet, who was born on September 1/13th, 1824, was indeed unmanageable. He was tall, strong, and had an attractive face. He was happy in having had excellent tutors. When eighteen years old he went to Italy and then in two years obtained his *bacalaureat ès lettres* at Geneva. Afterwards he studied law in Paris, where he had an episode with two *apachés*, and killed one of them. In 1848 he was nominated LL.D. *cum plauso* in the University of Pisa. During that year of troubles he offered to fight for Italy as a *condottiere* of Greek volunteers, and when the Government refused to accept his services he proceeded to fight for the liberty of Hungary. After failing, however, to take an actual part in any war, he fell in love with a graceful girl, the only daughter of Emilio Tipaldo and a Cypriote lady. Tipaldo was an *homme de lettres*, *très lié avec Manzoni avec Parini*, and thorough liberal, and Elisa had been brought up in the ideas of her father. The marriage took place at Venice in 1852 and the pair settled down in Leucas. But soon Valaoritis began to have a finger in the revolutionary movements of the Epirotes against the Sultan, despite the prohibitions of the Ionian Government. His papers were seized at Peta and sent to the Lord High Commissioner, Sir Henry George Ward, who hastened in person to Leucas on board a man-of-war and summoned the poet to appear before him. His apology was laconic—"I have done my duty," he said. Then the High Commissioner asked Valaoritis' father to send him abroad for a year. But when Valaoritis returned from Venice, Ward invited him to lunch and said to him: "You, Sir, had done your duty; I had also to do mine."

After the death of his father, Valaoritis was elected representative of Leucas in his place in March, 1857. In the preceding month Solomos had died, and Valaoritis, who was present at his funeral, wrote an ode upon his death and became his poetical heir.

A few months later in the same year, 1857, Valaoritis published his *Μνημόσυνα* ("In Memoriam") which were immediately admired by all competent critics and extolled

by Dora d'Istria in the *Révue des deux mondes*. Ten years before, in 1847, he had edited a collection, *Στίχοι* (" Verses "), in puristic language and Byronic style, none of which is worth mentioning. Now he appeared a complete and original artist ; he tried to recall to life the heroes who had distinguished themselves half a century before,—the precursors of the great revolution. His restoration of the past compares well with the best imaginative historical literature, for instance, *Goetz von Bŏrlihingen* of Goethe, *Promessi Sposi* of Manzoni and Walter Scott's novels. But the *Μνημόσυνα* do not form a whole ; they are disconnected poems, having for their scene the mountains of Thessaly, Macedonia, and the Epirus, which latter he considered as his true fatherland. He has told us himself with what eyes he looked upon its mountains :

Πόσες φορὲς ἀπὸ μακρὰν ἀνήλικο παιδάκι
Ὁ δύστυχος ἐκύτταζα τὴν καταχνιὰ τοῦ Πίνδου
Μοῦ φαίνετο πῶς ἤτανε καπνὸς ἀπὸ τουφέκι
Κ' ἐπρόσμενα σιωπηλὸς ν' ἀκούσω τὴν βοή του.

" How often, a child, I, poor creature, looked at Pindos' mist. I thought it was the smoke of a rifle and I waited in silence to hear its report."

But his imagination was so strong that he heard the rifles of many a dead *κλέφτης*.

One of the *Μνημόσυνα* represents an old *κλέφτης* Demos dying ; his last wish was to hear once more the report of his rifle ; and then smiling he expired and the soul of the Kleftis, he says, " encountered his rifle's smoke in the clouds and faded away together." The whole poem, set to a folk melody by Carrer, is a real gem.

Another poem represents another great *κλέφτης* Katsantonis, whom, at last, sixty Albanians succeeded in seizing while his brother was carrying him away wounded. Ali Pasha delivered them both over to the Gypsies to be butchered under a plane-tree, and the poet tells how the tree after drinking their blood, " grew strong and tall and spread its branches wider, so that Ali Pasha beheld them in his dreams by night."

Equally fine is his poem on another famous ἀρματωλός Blachavas, whom, being of unknown parents, Valaoritis by a flight of fancy makes the son of the two mountains Olympus and Ossa. The conception, as Mme. Lamber says, is "*grandiose et magnifique*"; but the poet, as we shall see, has the power of realizing it.

In the *Thanassis Vayias,* who was a traitor, the poet describes his phantom visiting his widow by night, with a terrible vividness, which reminds us of Dante's *Inferno.*

But perhaps the best of the *Μνημόσυνα* is *ἡ Φυγή*, the flight of Ali Pasha, defeated in the battle of April 20th, 1792, by the Souliotes. The description of his black charger, its gallop, its terror, is magnificent. But still better pictured is the horror of Ali, who ever thinks to hear his name in the darkness. Evidently Valaoritis was delighted in picturing the tyrant as frightened, just as Æschylus was in representing Xerxes in humiliation and despair.

Two years later, in 1859, the poet published a more extensive work about Ali Pasha, called *Κυρὰ Φροσύνη*, after the name of his heroine, which he dedicated to his wife.

It is divided into four cantos, but it cannot be defined either as an epos or a drama. It is neither. It contains no central idea. It is a series of lyrics in which he tries to represent two opposite characters—Ali with his cruelty, his infidelity, his perfidy, and his dissimulation, and a beautiful Greek woman Phrosyne, who deserted her children for the love of Ali's son, Muchtar. Valaoritis succeeds in making her sympathetic to the reader because she resists the love of the tyrant up to the end. He gives also the general lines of Ali Pasha and perhaps his Ali is the truest of all, but the details are not always above criticism. For instance, the idea of Ali kneeling before Phrosyne is too romantic. Tommaseo was right in writing to him: "*Tema il domerino Asiatico ch'è più pernizioso del Parigino*" ("Be afraid of an Asiatic lover, who is more dangerous than the Parisian"). The whole poem gives the impression of a great opera, in which the poet introduces various melodies, seeking for antitheses and striving for a powerful effect. Mme. Lamber (p. 285) says: "*Que de noblesse dans le patriotisme que d'emportement dans la passion, et quel sentiment de la nature!*"

The pictures are bold, many melodies are worthy of the poet, but there is no unity of plot.

After publishing *Kyra Phrosyne* the poet busied himself with the question of the union of the Ionian islands with the Kingdom of Greece. His meeting with Gladstone, who went there to examine the whole matter, is amusing, as it is related by the poet. Gladstone on arriving at Leucas invited him to come and see him and congratulated him upon his poems. But Valaoritis, convinced that the great Philhellene had never read a single line of his verses, was haunted by suspicion that Gladstone was trying only to win his approval in favour of his political schemes, which the poet refused even to listen to *en tête à tête*. Gladstone afterwards invited him twice to lunch. But the poet refused " under the pretext of his precarious health." But he was very much flattered when Gladstone sent him his congratulations upon the memorial to the Queen, which he had written on behalf of the islanders.

The following XIIIth Parliament of the Ionians, which met on October 19th, 1863, was (with the permission of the Lord High Commissioner) to declare whether the Ionian islanders wished to be placed under the crown of Prince George, who had just been elected King of the Hellenes. The document of the union was also written by the poet, who had proposed the section expressing thanks to the Queen. During that memorable session Valaoritis himself wrote that " he was instantly in floods of tears."

After the union, Valaoritis wished to withdraw to his own small island of Madouri and there write in peace. But the people of Leucas again sent him as their representative to the National Assembly of Athens, where he found no contentment. The poet yearned for patriotic flights and found party quarrels very prosaic. In 1866 he returned to his villa, where he completed his *Θανάσης Διάκος*, and in a few days wrote his small masterpiece, *'Αστραπόγιαννος*.

Thanassis Diacos as a whole, is better than *Kyra Phrosyne*. The hero who undertook to defend the illustrious Thermopylæ Straits thought that a retract was out of the question and that his sacrifice was necessary for the general cause. The plan of the poem is patriotic, but what a noble patriot-

ism! The modesty of the hero permeates the whole poem. The Albanian rival Omer Bryoni is equally brave and honest, but has no patriotic ideal, and this antithesis gives to Diacos a genuine grandeur. The description of the battle and the dialogues heard in it are very animated, but the best beauties of the poem are its descriptions of Greek nature in spring.

The revolution of Crete now called the poet back to Athens. The Government put forward various military and financial votes, and Valaoritis arose to support them as the national programme. He spoke for an hour and a half and for an hour afterwards was compelled to lie down to recover from his emotion. Even his oratory was tinged with poetry and the audience were simply carried away. But Valaoritis was not born for parliamentary discussions, especially those of his days. In 1862 (June 12th), when a member used insulting language against one of Valaoritis's friends, he replied with his fist. Even on this occasion his friends applauded him, but the majority expressed their disapproval. The poet finally retired from politics in 1869. For ten more years on he lived in his villa, but not in happiness. An earthquake destroyed his house and property, and he fell into straightened circumstances. But he was very pleased when he was invited by the Prytanis of the University to deliver a poem on the national festival of 1871 to celebrate the erection of a statue to the Patriarch Gregory the V. His success was unparalleled. His voice and his emotion moved the audience to tears. His bearing was like that of his heroes. The enthusiasm of the Athenians touched him very much, and also the magnificent reception accorded to him by his own countrymen on his return home. His letters to his wife prove how much the poet valued these popular demonstrations.

But his health was already declining. During the Russo-Turkish war he again took part in the revolution of Epirus and the failure of that country to gain its liberty hastened the heart trouble, from which he was suffering. He died in Leucas, separated from his family in 1879, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

Even before he died Valaoritis was called " the national

poet." Another epic poem, which he had no time to complete, *Φωτεινὸς* proved that he aimed also at reviving the period of the Frankish occupation of his own island. *Photinos* might have become his masterpiece. Valaoritis's Pegasus seems in it to have *ἡνία σιγαλόεντα* (" splendid reins ") and his patriotism is more controlled.

But it would be a mistake to convey the idea that Valaoritis is a national poet only because he treated Greek national subjects. The important thing is that Valaoritis has a national, a modern Greek, poetical style. This requires an explanation.

I have already mentioned that one of the chief characteristics and charms of our folk poetry is that it represents nature—both living and inanimate—as feeling and sometimes speaking. Now, it might be said that Valaoritis, looking at Greek nature as a lover, is always holding conversation with her. At his touch everything, mountain, lake, tree, plant, wave, daybreak, night—takes a soul, moves and gives him answer—an admirable poetical echo, which he is able to make us all hear distinctly.

Even his heroes, poetically magnified though they are, do not appear mere phantoms. We see them as men, taller than ourselves, and we are convinced that the poet himself saw and knew them. We see that the poet was familiar with nature and all its details, for he knows as no other Greek poet the kinds of birds, trees, plants, their ancient and scientific names and every folk tradition about them. And he expresses all his visions in the true popular dialect of Epirus as he himself studied it among the people and thus he gives them an incomparable local colour.

If I had to define Valaoritis's art I should say that it is an artistic development of the folk-songs; I would say that the poet borrowed popular melodies and gave them a rich harmony for a complete orchestra. Perhaps this harmony occasionally reminds us of the west. But as the poet became older his harmony also became more and more Greek. Roïdes complained that Valaoritis did not succeed in giving a perfect masterpiece, as Victor Hugo, of whom he considers Valaoritis to have been a pupil " superior in sentiment." I do not hesitate to say that, although Hugo

as a lyric poet is much stronger and more fertile, Valaoritis has richer national colour. Among the Greek poets only Solomos and Kalvos were abler artists ; but Valaoritis had a deeper inspiration, as he was a greater patriot. None was prouder than he of having been born a Greek, and Greece can be prouder of very few men than Valaoritis.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

Rector of the National University of Greece, Athens.

These authoritative articles by Dr. Menardos on the modern efflorescence of Greek poetry—a corrective to the many who seem to think that Greek poetry ceased with the classics—were commenced in THE POETRY REVIEW for May-June, 1927, but each article may be regarded as complete in itself. Back numbers may be obtained from the Poetry Society for 2/6 each (post free).

* * *

The new volume of *The Letters of Queen Victoria* (1879-1885) published by the authority of H.M. the King, and edited by George Earle Buckle, (Murray), includes an interesting entry in the Queen's Journal regarding Tennyson, who was *persona grata* a Court.

" Osborne, 7th Aug., 1883. After luncheon, saw the great Poet Tennyson, who remained nearly an hour, and most interesting it was. Hs is grown very old, his eyesight much impaired, and he is very shaky on his legs. But he is very kind and his conversation was most agreeable. He spoke of the many friends he had lost, and what it would be if he did not feel and know that there was another world where there would be no partings, of his horror of unbelievers and philosophers, who would try to make one believe that there was no other world, no immortality, who tried to explain everything away in a miserable manner. We agreed that, were such a thing possible, God, Who is Love, would be far more cruel than a human being. He quoted some well-known lines of Goethe, whom he so much admires. . . . I told him what a comfort *In Memoriam* had always been to me, which seemed to please him ; but he said I could not believe the number of shameful letters of abuse he had received about it. Incredible ! When I took leave of him, I thanked him for his kindness, and said how much I appreciated it, for I had gone through much, to which he replied, ' You are so alone on that terrible height. I have only a year or two more to live, but I am happy to do anything for you I can.' "

* * *

Miss Viola Garvin, daughter of Mr. J. L. Garvin, and Literary Editor of the *Observer* will publish during the spring, through Messrs. Victor Gollancz, Ltd., her first book—a volume of poems entitled *Dedication.* " Miss Garvin is a poet in the old tradition, but with a new note. Her melodies are sensitive, to express the sensitiveness of her lyric mood ; but they are never deliberately or artificially quaint. Her novelty is not that of a school, but of an inspiration."

ON THOMAS HARDY

HARDY'S criticism of life does not even lead to the bitter wisdom of Schopenhauer; a sense of pity is the only outcome of his contemplation, and he is consistent in his pessimistic outlook throughout his work. It is a conception born of intellectual pride; life and the world appear to him irrational; there is, in most cases, hidden behind passions and events, "the ugly power, that, occult, rules the world, leading to and working out universal evil," of Leopardi. Most of his best novels end in tragedy, and there is the same hard bitterness in his lyrics. *Jude the Obscure* is his most typical work for the representation of his conception of life. "Fate, whose name is sorrow," says Poe; and so it is with Hardy; and he asks continually "Why?" and leaves the question unanswered. Like Schopenhauer, he endeavours to pierce through the illusion, the many-coloured web of life, through the successes of destiny, to get at the root of passion, to find out the primary emotions. He finds them in love and the conflicts of love, but he does not descry any cause; it is simply the impulse and repulsion of an electrical force working on souls; that's all what his study leads him to; there is no *because*. There is in him a quietude born of despair, the quietude of a spirit, that, darkened by the absence of faith, is vainly brooding on life; and this desperate calm weighs on his work and gives it an oppressive atmosphere. The outer world is only the pained reflection of his interior world; nature is depicted with faithful, minute observation, as in Dutch painting, but it is essentially a projection of the moods of the personages. When Elfride confesses his former love to Knight, "the word fell like a bolt, and the very land and sky seemed to suffer.—Knight turned aside.—The scene was engraved for years on the retina of Knight's eye: the dead and brown stubble, the weeds among it, the distant belt of beeches shutting out the view of the house, the leaves of which were now red and sick to death." [1]

As in high lyric poetry, nature becomes a symbol of life; the unbroken sorrow of life, from birth to death, and

[1] *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, p. 399.

the yearning to eternal rest, is represented by the saplings which Giles and Marty are planting, in a magnificent passage, full of simple reality and brimming with pathos. "'How they sigh directly we put 'em upright, though while they are lying down they don't sigh at all,' said Marty.—'Do they?' said Giles. 'I've never noticed it.'—She erected one of the young pines into its hole, and held up her finger; the soft musical breathing instantly set in, which was not to cease night or day till the grown tree should be felled—probably long after the two planters had been felled themselves."[1] There is a studious—almost scientific—character in Hardy's observation of nature, as Ruskin noted in Turner.[2] Some details—as the fungi in the hollow where Bathsheba spends the night after her flight from Troy—supply a symbolical motive—here of evil, hideous powers. An emotion of deep, almost cruel, effect is given by the light of the glow-worms stuck on thorns by Wildeve to light his game of dice with Diggory Venn.[3] The sun is personified "with a drunken leer," as mocking at Knight's distress.[4] The reiterance of the sweet and melancholy motive of the rustling trees echoes throughout *The Woodlanders*. The beauty of his nature descriptions depends on a strict realism and on a high feeling of beauty. Wonderfully subtle is his sensitiveness to the voices of nature, and expressed with an inmost feeling and a relation to the infinite which remind us of Wordsworth. A glance at the passage where the dead heath-bells sing to the breeze would prove the mastery of Hardy as a nature poet.[5]

[1] *The Woodlanders*, p. 77.

[2] Cf. in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, 245, Knight observing the eddying of the wind over the cliffs, and also, *id.* 251, the passage where Knight, in danger of imminent death, thinks of the geological formation and epoch of the rocks.

[3] *The Return of the Native*, p. 288 ff.

[4] "Nobody would have expected the sun to shine on such an evening as this. Yet it appeared, low down upon the sea. Not with its natural golden fringe . . . but as a splotch of vermilion red upon a leaden ground—a red face looking on with a drunken leer."—*A Pair of Blue Eyes*, p. 256.

[5] "They were the *mummied* heath-bells of the past summer.—So low was *an individual sound* from these that *a combination of hundreds* only emerged from silence, and the myriads of the whole declivity reached the woman's ear but *as a shrivelled and intermittent recitative*. Yet scarcely *a single accent* among the many afloat to-night could have such a power to impress a listener with thoughts of its origin. One *inwardly saw* the infinity of those combined multitudes; and perceived that each of the tiny trumpets was seized on, entered, secured and emerged from by the wind *as thoroughly as if it were as vast as a crater*.—'The spirit moved them.' A meaning of the phrase forced itself upon the attention. . . ."—*The Return of the Native*, p. 63.

We notice in his polished, highly-finished expression, a thorough discarding of all padding, a holding back of any piercing outcry; hence the distinction of his style, of his intense, strictly personal form—a form chastened to a refined simplicity, in spite of its rich contents of poetical feeling and imagery. His poetical world is the visible identity of his abstract conception. His use of bold and fine similes and metaphors reveals in him that faculty of descrying analogies between objects apparently widely different, which is the characteristic of the true poet. He is deeply aware of the illuminating power of words, and he is therefore extremely careful in their choice, place in the phrase, appositeness to mood and feeling; he strikes us, concealing much patient labour, both as felicitous and original in his language, as precise and subtle in his form, and yet not without that colloquial ease which is the necessary medium of the novel, of narrative prose. The poetic quality of his style may be perceived at its best in such a passage as the storm in *Far from the madding crowd*, where, with admirable skill the fantastic element is woven into the exact vision of reality.[1]

We see the writer working in the stillness of his solitude —watching intently life and nature—thinking, conceiving, painting. He is always happy in his choice of the right pictorial word. Very simple and plain is the phrase-pattern, with few marked emphases; but we feel that his phrases come from a great depth, and that his work is made up of ancient sorrow and of beautiful poetry; and the terror and dark strength of life and passion and their tragic issues blend and end into the ecstasy of beauty of his picture. He chooses only the significant features of a scene. And, in spite of his strict realism, the ground of his

[1] "A light *flapped* over the scene, as if *reflected from phosphorescent wings crossing the* sky. . . . The lightning now was the colour of silver, and *gleamed in the heavens like a mailed army*. . . . A poplar in the immediate foreground was *like an ink stroke on burnished tin*. . . . Out *leapt* the fifth flash, *with the spring of a serpent and the shout of a fiend; it was green as an emerald*. . . . Heaven opened then, indeed. The flash was almost too novel for its inexpressibly dangerous nature to be at once realized, and they could only comprehend the magnificence of its beauty. It sprang from east, west, north, south. *It was a perfect dance of death. The forms of skeletons appeared in the air, shaped with blue fire for bones* . . . leaping, racing around. . . . With these were intertwined *undulating snakes of green*. . . . Simultaneously came from every part of the *tumbling* sky *what may be called a shout*. . . ."—p. 291, ff.

work is essentially imaginative art. We are fascinated by it, by its sheer force of beauty. His creatures are wrought outwards from within ; such is Elfride, the daughter of the mystery region of Castle Boterel, such is Eustacia, the offspring of the sinister heath. Their voices are the very voice of passion singing in the poet's soul. Hence the intellectual substance of his prose, his pictures always affording us a glimpse of the soul behind them. This mental ardour causes him to invest natural objects and events with an air of mystery, as if everyone of them were laden with spirit and eternity. In *The Woodlanders*, for instance, the life of trees is interwoven with the life of men, and we see a clear symbol of this conception in South, who is haunted by the thought that a tree is linked to his existence ; the tree being felled down, he dies. He vainly tries to find out the significance of life, which to him does but show passion and suffering and does not yield any supernatural meaning, only, perhaps, as we perceive in *The Dynasts*, a dim power working out to an unknowable goal. And yet, aiming above all at the creation of beauty, he harmonizes sorrow and pain into a solemn loveliness, like Beethoven in the *Appassionata*. And poetry is at root of all his works. His prose is full of diffused lyrism, with music and colour in subdued tones, with hardly felt rhythms and cadences, which echo the very resonance of shades of feeling and transitory moods. Images, in similes and metaphors, gush spontaneously from an inner source ; but, while the poetical imagery outcrops in some novelists —Meredith, for instance—here it is kept under and woven with the simple narrative form. Hence the calm glow of his prose—a prose refined by a process of arduous craftsmanship, striking out all but what is most essential, yet not without a certain ease and freedom. Words, carefully selected, stand out according to their importance ; the clearness of his drawing and tinting derives from the correctness and lucidity of his style. He never tortures the language to get strange or elusive effects ; we rather notice in his speech that kind of exquisite embarrassment in the use of language, which is often found in great writers, a kind of effort in the use of words, showing the

struggle to express with utmost precision thought and sensation. Verbal melody is not sought after; yet his form is spontaneously well-sounding. It is a style which aims at mirroring, as faithfully as possible, truth in feeling and emotion; yet, poetical truth, which is beauty.

His expression is so composed that at times the point of irony is scarcely perceptible. There is a vein of humour in his pictures of rustics, glittering and sparkling in the serene idyll *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and lingering in the later novels, though more subdued, and restricted to single scenes, such as the gathering of yokels at the beginning of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and the discussion about the box in *The Trumpet-major*. Bad characters loom as darker shadows on the already dusky stage; Grace marries a rascal, Fitzpiers, just as Bathsheba marries Troy; Fitzroy, Alec, and Dave are thorough villains; Troy shows a capability for love, as it appears in the scene where he reveals to Bathsheba his love for Fanny. Bathsheba, Grace, and especially Anne, show fickleness, pride, vanity, and unpardonable silliness. Paula is no better. With a tortuous and cruel logic they lead their lovers to disaster and death, or, at least, to long, undeserved suffering. As in Verlaine's *Colombine :*

Tout ce monde vu,
  Rit, chante
Et danse devant
Une belle enfant
  Méchante.—
Fatidique cours
  Des astres,
Oh, dis-moi vers quels
Mornes, ou cruels
  Désastres
L'implacable enfant—
Conduit son troupeau
De dupes ?

Hardy's passionate contemplative mind, looking at the outward as well as at the inward tragedy, comes to descry the endless misery of life, in all its forms; a sombre conception, not unlike A. E. Housman's; and he maintains throughout his work this stern outlook.

In the structure of his novels the web of fact and fancy is inextricable. Hardy's technique is more clearly seen in the building up of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *The Return of the Native*, in *Tess* and *Jude*, rather than in the careful—too careful, artificious—construction of *The Well-beloved*, where, by means of events ingeniously combined, he tries to show the vanity of the search of the ideal. It is more of a metaphysical tract on love than a novel.

His personages are mostly dreams heightened to realities, shaped by his creative energy. He aims at setting life clearly before us and at expounding his ethical interpretation of our thinking and doing ; as a psychologist, his task is the careful examination of souls and the knowledge of the exact nature of every mind ; but the fire of poetry burning in his heart breaks out—synthetically—in the very shaping of the romance of passions and events, and—analytically—in metaphors and images. Feelings, emotions, vague yearnings and forebodings are playing in the hearts of his creatures as reflections in coloured spar ; and they are suggested by the narrator, rather than plainly and openly spoken. Yet, sometimes, his lyric power shows itself freely, in such outbursts as the words of Marty, at the close of *The Woodlanders*, while she is strewing flowers on Giles's grave.

His dramatic power shines at its brightest in *Tess*, in which the heart-rending pathos of *Clarissa Harlowe* is revived with a subtlety and strength which the diffuse art of the eighteenth-century novelist could not reach ; the plot begins in tragedy, and ends with a tragic sunset of flaming blood.

In *Far from the Madding Crowd* Boldwood's passion—a smouldering, drowsy fire, lit by Bathsheba's stupidity and frivolity—suddenly flames up, and his rash action—like Tess's—concludes the play. In *Jude* we mark the shadowy advance of fate, the pitiless hand stretching out to kill Jude and his children. In *The Return of the Native* the working of fate is more veiled ; it appears, however, in the death of Mrs. Yeobright stung by an adder, and in the baleful influence exercised by Eustacia, a sinister figure of exotic beauty which is perhaps only equalled by Zenobia in

Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*. Nevertheless, in spite of Hardy's conception in these plots, we never meet in him with the cynic crudity of Kendal ; his final view is one of sympathetic comprehension and deep pity.

Elfride and Eustacia are like perilous flowers in an enchanted land, bringing sorrow and disaster to those who touch them ; their beauty—the sombre ardour of Eustacia, the tender loveliness of Elfride—is tragic. The heroine of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* has the pathetic charm of an unopened bud, which might become a magnificent chalice but for a strange entanglement of events and for its weakness ; her eyes are reflections of the azure bloom of the cliffs over the sea and they linger in our memory like unearthly lamps.[1] Eustacia arises like a gorgeous Eastern flower strangely blown on the bleak Egdon Heath, radiant with an unholy charm, stern in her passionate life, stately in death. In these two figures is seen at its best the imaginative suggestiveness of Hardy's portrait-painting ; they are aureoled by a fascinating tenderness and pity and an inexplicable splendour.

It may seem—particularly in Tess, Jude, Henchard—that fate works out its plan, inexorably, to torture and destroy ; but this fate is really in the souls of the personages, in their will and passion ; as it is said in *The Imitation :* " We have no worse enemies than ourselves. It is as if there were an implacable enemy to oneself in one's self. His lovers are slaves, dying slowly in the thraldom of passion ; like the knight in Keats' ballad, they may say that the beautiful " Lady sans merci " has them in thrall. They do not even make efforts—ineffectual though they may be—to free themselves from the bondage of love ; Gabriel Oak, Giles, John Loveday, Somerset, suffer cruelly, but go on along their track, as if it were chalked by an inevitable hand. A primeval unconsciousness of passion glimmers out of his creatures ; they do not wrestle with their blind impulses, but drift along, never looking at the end ; as Viviette and St. Swithin on the lonely tower among the dark fields and

[1] " Blue as the blue we see between the retreating mouldings of hills and woody slopes on a sunny September morning. A misty and shady blue, that had no beginning or surface, and was looked *into* rather than *at*."—p. 2.

fir woods, lost in their love as their look is lost in the infinite of the starry space, they seem only aware of the present moment, which, for them, includes eternity. And they pay with sorrow and disaster the penalty of their fleeting enjoyment.

There is an ethereal touch in the picture of Tess in the ghostly light of dawn,[1] and a legendary glamour in the introduction to Elfride's drama, which takes place in the dreamland of Arthur and Tristan.[2] And a mystic light glimmers in the souls of Tess, of Angel, of Jude; their minds often turn to the Sacred Scripture [3]; and Clym turns an itinerant preacher. The intense consciousness of guilt —the enjoyment, so to say, of tormenting oneself with the continuous sting of remorse—that self-torture which form the aim of Esther Prynne and Arthur Dimmerdale in Hawthorne's masterpiece—appears vividly in Tess. But all these mystic feelings do not drive their souls to action; they die in solitude, bound on all sides by an impenetrable mist. The deepest note is struck in Jude's dying hour—the solemn strain of Job being interrupted by the mob's cries—and in Henchard's composing of his own epitaph.

There is no hint at future bliss or punishment. "The rest is silence." There is nothing of the Unseen, except a hint in Grace's phrase,[4] or a suggestion of the invisible powers of evil in Susan's incantation. "Save his own soul he hath no star," is a characteristic motto from Swinburne to a part of *Jude*. They are—all of them—good or bad—cut off from hope of eternity, none of them thinks of a life beyond life; and yet the feeling of eternity is among all of them. They destroy their happiness either by being slave to sudden impulses—Jude, Henchard—or, by being unfaithful and fickle—Elfride, Bathsheba—or, still, by keeping

[1] "The mixed, singular, luminous gloom in which they (Angel and Tess) walked . . . often made him think of the Resurrection hour. While all the landscape was in neutral shade his companion's face—rising above the mist stratum—seemed to have a sort of phosphorescence upon it. She looked ghostly, as if she were merely a soul at large."—*Tess*, p. 170.

[2] "Preface" to *A Pair of Blue Eyes*: "The place is . . . the region of dream and mystery. . . ."

[3] Cf. *Tess*, 135, when she looks at the river: "The Froom waters were clear as the pure River of Life shown to the Evangelist."

[4] "O, Edred, there has been an Eye watching over us to-night, and we should be thankful, indeed!"—*The Woodlanders*, p. 448.

their faith to the bitter end—Giles, Loveday. All their aim is on earth and for the earth ; they seldom turn their eyes to Heaven. Sue turns to praying, when remorse and pain become intolerable to her heart. There are good, honest men—Oak, Giles, the Reddleman—but with a *natural* religion ; without faith, without even a foreshadowing of the beyond. Nevertheless, the author cannot do but presuming a supreme Power, or Schopenauerian enigmatic *Will ;* and he feels it present everywhere ; yet dark ; and ambiguous riddle.

In his spiritual loneliness, with his individual vision, contemplating life as with the cold stillness of a dead passion, he shows a seriousness and austerity of outlook and expression, as of a man judging from outside and afar ; his whole reliance lies upon what is visible in life and nature; perhaps the highest point of vantage he looks at life from is to be found in *The Dynasts*, where, as if he were beholding events and characters from above, he seems to descry, between the gloomy zenith and earth, airy shapes, the figures of Destinies and Pities, hovering over the cruel play of men.

Yet Hardy is essentially a poet, especially in his novels, and they will remain, not as the representation of a philosophical conception of life, but as a work of beauty in feeling and expression.

FEDERICO OLIVERO.

University of Turin.

SUMMER, 1927

A SKY of grey,
Unbroken, sad and still ;
A mist of rain against the hill,
And sodden hay
In fields where sullen water lies ;
Low, mournful skies,
And slanting clouds by day ;
At night loud winds that blow
The pattering drops against the pane—
And all the earth lies drowned below
The falling rain.

M. A. W.

THOMAS HARDY, 1840-1928

HIS purpose was fulfilled.
ALL he had willed
Of passion or of beauty to create
Or of the whims of fate
In subtle dreaming skilled
He fashioned soon or late.

The fate of human kind
Engrossed his mind.
Pain falling from some star
Or bitter spite to mar
Joys that the heart may find :—
He knew that these things are.

Wide as the world his thought
In all he wrought ;
Yet that familiar land, his own,
Beloved through times long flown,
Gave him the might that fought
Dark thoughts of the Unknown.

A. J. G. RUSSELL.

HARDY, THE COMPASSIONATE

AS when the tide, upheaving and full-pent,
From deeps and heights of Ocean's lifted breast,
Breaks moaning through the tortured shore's unrest,
To the cold, crying stones, with mixed lament :
So the full surge of his barred soul outwent
Ever in sorrow, to a world distressed ;
Ever it broke where drearful Chance oppressed,
Or Death came . . . mocking at Life's hope forspent.

He is no more ! Who these—this splendrous throng—
At his enshrinement ? What had *he*, cloud-capped
With glooms and drift, of power one soul to move ?
These, lo, are they who hear his brooding song,
And feel his fret ; yet see inly inwrapt,
The looming mists shot through rose-red with Love.

January, 1928. J. MARION SOPER.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY

XVI: VIRGINIA STAIT AND OTHERS

THE thought of the State of Virginia, in whatever way it may be induced to-day, brings to the world the glow of great deeds gallantly done, miraculously done. We, of this day, are thinking, perhaps, more than in any age of the world's history, of the achievements of Science made possible by the extraordinary valour of the youth of this, our time, and the mention of Virginia to-day brings to the mind the latest of the Virginia cavaliers—scion of an illustrious ancestry, pioneers in the New World—Commander Richard E. Byrd and his stupendous accomplishments, the first flight to the North Pole and the flight across the Atlantic, who now plans the first flight to the South Pole!

Virginia, which was once a vast empire extending over most of the lands of America, and was the "Mother of the States," was likewise the mother of American poetry, but the succession of wars in which the flower of her manhood perished stilled the poetic voices until recently. Foremost among these poetic voices is one whose name links her forever with her state because her ancestors were among the early pioneers who moulded the destiny of this great state, and who has appropriately adopted the name of her state as a *nom-de-plume*—Virginia Stait.

Miss Winifred Russell, of Gordonsville, Va., better known in the world of letters by her *nom-de-plume*, is one of the most published and appreciated poets of the South. Her book *Sanctuary* brought wide praise from such authorities as Lord Dunsany, Gamaliel Bradford, John Drinkwater, William Lyon Phelps, Dr. Mary Brent Whiteside, and Professor Kennedy Walton Humphreys. It has been said that Miss Stait has been under the influence of Swinburne, and she possesses a haunting quality suggestive of Aldrich. N. H. Dole, writing in the *Boston Transcript*, says of the *Sanctuary*:

> "One does not read far into Miss Russell's forty lyrics before discovering that she has been under the influence of Swinburne. This is betrayed by her rhythms and by her alliterations; yet it is not carried into any slavish imitation and is perfectly legitimate and does not detract from their merit. . . . It must be said of these lyrics, in so many varied forms, that they are not to be read once and then laid aside to be forgotten. They call for repeated perusal and each time one discovers in them what one might term overtones, subtle, deep-searching, appealing to the inner spirit. . . .
>
> "Her Eastern poems are richly embroidered with characteristic tints and are among the best. She shows also that she was

deeply moved by the great war. Several of her lyrics embody her reactions; they are touching and sympathetic. In one she discovers that even the flowers were troubled. She would not be a Virginian by birth, by inheritance, and by adopted name if she did not bring flowers into her verses; flowers and the trees of Ovid and bridges and ships, though her ships generally dwindle into boats, are frequently apostrophized.

"She can certainly claim a foremost place among the singing aviary of these modern days."

In the POETRY REVIEW of May, 1926, there appeared a short appreciation, ending: "A paradoxical close kinship between the intensity of Burns and the chaste classic expression of Landor seems to have found a counterpart in the poetry of this singer." To this the writer would like to add, in completion, her poems *Arteries, Hunger;* and, since this appreciation is written on Armistice Day, the widely-quoted poem *To the Unknown Soldier* and *Cleopatra.*

Arteries, published in the *Westminster Magazine,* Oglethorpe University, Georgia, for September, 1927, has a distinct background of Virginia tradition:

The blood of cavaliers I hold in trust,
  On days when plumes are intimate with me;
And I disown all Puritans—as dust,
  And heels and powder both proclaim degree!

But what Crusader, in what ancient land,
  So armoured me beyond the power of death,
That I must fret the flesh so I may stand
  And sentinel my own flags with my faith?

* * * *

But the long thought that comes from every age
  Is what the ones who follow me will claim
As heritage? Will they dance from my stage
  Or call some cloister by my restless name?

Hunger expresses the everlasting hunger for that which our soul desires:

I feel the need of you so great to-day
  My soul cries to my body, in its pain;
And flesh and muscle, brain and heart reply,
    On quest—again.

I would reach out and thrust back gold of sun,
  And cloud, sky's stormy grief that understands,
And realm on realm of blue I would divide,
    With my bare hands.

To the Unknown Soldier admirably epitomizes that symbolic "Unknown" hero who represents the millions who fell in the World War:

By every name we voice in prayer
By memory to scar,
By faith between the here and there,
Where cross and chalice are;
By love the ages have reheard,
That hearts to hearts far-own,
We claim you, dearer by that word
We sign you with—unknown.

Cleopatra is rich in imagery, romance and poetic expressions:

(Reply to a Cleopatra poem, in which the queen is asked why she was spendthrift to a serpent.)

Across the ages many suns have burned—
The arch is scarred from dawn until the dark—
And moons have torched and totalled and returned,
A whispered arc.

But never suns in flame or moons in foam
Have challenged, as Egyptian stars, my light,
From cupola and vault, from column, dome,
Defying night!

And never sard, though you should fill a room,
Has blazed as mine, from throat unto my feet,
And never grapes have bloomed from such rare bloom
As mine, life-sweet!

And not a word you reckon love and faith,
But would be echo to the words I heard;
And if you thought oaths yours, beyond your death,
Antony erred!

This flesh, so eagered for Anubis, sand,
Had reached the height of things that are supreme,
Had gathered all from my Egyptian land,
Except the dream!

* * *

EDWARD STEESE, whose first book, *Storms in Harvest*, was reviewed in Section VIII of the Dynamics, has now published his second volume, *Spring Night* (Erskine Macdonald, Ltd., London). Defining this thoughtful and significant sequence of sonnets as a Review of Youth, Mr. Steese introduces it with a note on the plan of the poem which

carries out the sub-title of the book. It is a philosophical and noble review of youth with high-minded concepts. Thus :

> Graduation from college is opportunity to discover what there is of worth in the past, and what of hope for the future. The poet, a short time after his own graduation, remembering his own realizations, finds it suitable to address his friends, and in so doing slips unconsciously into past time, imagining himself as self-appointed orator and moralist to the multitude assembled for " Senior Singing " the night before Commencement. His theme is an apology for his own, the " younger," generation, together with an outline of its background in the past, its relation to the war, and the position in which it finds itself to-day. Whatever doubts and problems present themselves are to be solved by a realsaition of the inherent and potential nobility of Man.
>
> After finding his hearers more interested in their immediate distractions, he nevertheless continues his discussion, as if to the imagined audience, yet with a greater freedom. He considers the Victorian era the *Fin-de-Siècle* whose spirit actually existed far into the new century, and then, embittered by the War's destruction of youth for an ungrateful world, seeks solace in a religion of pain. Appealing once more to the innate romanticism and sentiment of mankind, after forespeaking a possible doom, he discusses the war-sacrifice from national and personal standpoints, ending with an appeal to love of beauty and inherited nobility through the image of England and her public schools. He mourns for his country's dead, and suggesting we take example in their heroism, brings us into the present post-war period and to their younger brothers, the Seniors who are now ready to take their place in life.
>
> The poet's formal discussion is at an end, and the Seniors themselves ring their own APOLOGIA.
>
> When they have finished, the poet turns to his personal guest, and for a time indulges in a few reminiscences of college life, thought of a possible immortality, the sadness of change, and the beauty of universities. He then tells of the ceremony after the singing, and suggests it as a fitting opportunity to review the Seniors individually, and so tries to build a philosophy which would justify human life in the face of inevitable sadness and an unpropitious universe. Finally, as an appeal to beauty and the foundation of a faith, he paints the picture of man's life and experience from birth to the threshold of his productive years. This faith in the closing sonnet-stanzas the poet seeks to justify, then, taking hope from the song which still lingers with him, he chides his heart for its cowardice, and says good-bye to his friends and youth.

We quote some of the hundred and twenty sonnets. The first :

This is an end, and this is a beginning
For us who pause upon our lives to look.
The won is now no longer in the winning.
We are between the chapters of our book.
To-night, who ponder with me in renewing
Old days, old dreams, and loves unfelt before :
Hopeful are we, and yet the past reviewing,
Are sad that it may present be no more.
Rich have the years been (though I speak for mine
More freely than for others) where I see
Much that's regrettable, but some that's fine,
And little things that are not small to me ;
And friends I find, and also some ideal—
But friends above all other things are real.

A note of warning is sounded in the following :

There bracken only, blackish bent, red rust
Gnawing at barbs that fetid flesh late gnawed
And livid mouths hung mute with chalk for crust,
Dry bones and brittle sherds of iron. Abroad
None wends on bitter ridge, pock-pitted plain,
But blinded ghosts with rabid flesh in shreds
Crying Gehennah of youth and death and pain.
The stark trees shiver against thunder-heads.
O Christ in agony, still strong to bear
This burdenous offering ? We have no breath,
We have no heart, our lips are dumb to prayer.
Jesus of Nazareth, then grant us death
With arms outstretched against a thunderous sky,
Thou Christ reborn on the new Calvary !

—

Statesmen, Press, and sages over-fed—
If aught like this should come to be again—
There's nothing to be done, less to be said,
For lessons all unlearnt or learned in vain.
In vain—for you forget as innocently
As weeds run up ; and war's a thing of dreams,
And light falls pleasantly down from the sky,
And who is killed in youth a hero seems ;
And he who dies a-bed is hardly so ;
And place-names have a false and hollow sound—
Ypres and *Vimy*, *Douaumont* and *Vaux*—
Where mild-eyed priests shall bless the broken ground.
Dispassionate the sun. The tourist too
Thinks so, and shakes his head, and views the view.

—

Lost is the gaiety and pride of France,
Her brave and warlike spirit where it fell ;

And she is dead, although she still may dance
Like an old courtesan who once was belle.
Evil the time that she has come upon,
After her strife whose feeble shanks must tire ;
She has no lover and she has no son,
She has no staff except a lust of fire.
Like one who gathers round on her last night
The furniture she loved, and too must wear
The trinkets of her youth to shield her fright ;
Who shrugs the shrunken shoulders that are bare—
Paris, the soul of France, with her tired face
Turns to the world its terrible grimace.

—

" The end shall come, and the whole world must fail.
This is a respite in the last great war."
Hear the low sound on all sides and go pale,
Then, if you think enough, you'll laugh no more.
" No glory shall there be, nor yet that drear
Disease and horror we so grimly weep,
Urged by a hope grown dimmer year by year,
When blackened Science puts us all to sleep.
There shall be nothing then, until pour in
Those slow and stranger currents from the East,
Gazing with wonder on the bare lands they win :
We are more happy when we think the least,
And what must be, must be, when all is said—
Nor shall we suffer greatly, when we're dead."

We turn from the dark vision to this more pleasing memory :

Bright air, and birds who now your matins say,
Sing on, and bring me memory of the years
When I a child would wake at break of day
To see the dew upon the grass like tears.
Sweet in our mind the time so far removed
When beauty was our bread and hours went
Slowly and gladly through the scenes we loved
In the so happy childhood that we spent.
O time of roses in the warm sunshine,
O ladies of long skirts and parasols—
Would we might still be put to bed at nine
While leafy shadows etched the moonlit walls !
My rhymes are trivial ; my heart is sore.
Such memories must come to me no more.

—

Lost is the home which I so loved and thought
All that was beautiful and sure and kind ;
Whose worth was human, and could not be bought—
It dwells within a dead part of my mind.

Lawns that I loved, and gardens where the sun
At evening struck long shadows from the west—
The dearest part of me is dead and done,
And yet I cannot put my heart at rest.
O beautiful, O lost, and you who bleed
More sadly even than I, we stand alone
On courage in a malfortunate world indeed!
But you whose fortitude in part I own,
I ask no part in greater heritage
Than the example of your life and age!

Looking ahead into the future, he says, meditatingly:

Wistful are we, for now the past reviewing,
We've seen its wealth. Wistful are we to-day;
For now our years in a short time renewing,
We find the worth we love but cannot say.
Neilson and Carleton, Thompson, Ted, and Hugh,
And Jack and John, and all the rest I know—
This the poor promise of my love to you;
I wonder what the future years may show.
I, who have known you well, in you can see
The test of all that life for which we stand;
You, who in friendship make it sweet to me,
Who offer you these poems with my hand.
Let us pretend we've just begun our song:
"*The hearts of gentlemen are true and strong.*"

Emily Hall-Hains shares with her relative, Sir William Schwenk Gilbert, in some degree his unforgettable power to charm. In Mrs. Hall-Hains we have a touch of the great Gilbert's ready pen, ready to meet the everyday, ready to meet the faraway, ready to meet the higher things. It is with interest that we study the mysterious mosaics of life's patterns in relation to art. There is a hint of necromancy about it all. Mrs. Hall-Hains has recently been greatly honoured in the taking of her sonnet, *The Silence* for Armistice Day by the magazine *Light*, and 8000 copies of that number were given away during the service at Albert Hall on Armistice Sunday. Dr. Conan Doyle has spoken of it as beautiful:

Our hearts have hearing as the silence falls
And stills awhile the traffic's constant flow;
We catch the whisper of a voice we know,
And live the joy its loving tone recalls.
Our eyes are opened, and at last we see
The face we sought distractedly in prayer,
Gaining no knowledge, but a dark despair
That held us blinded to the newly free.

Now joy is ours, for silence cannot bring
What is not there through all the busy day :
No speechless lips could form the words they say,
Nor self delusion cause our hearts to sing.
It is themselves, our dearest and our best,
Just as we knew them in the bygone years :
They never left us, it was but our tears
That dulled the inner vision, veiled the quest.

The writer of this appreciation, recently in London, is particularly happy over this mark of recognition as Mrs. Hall-Hains's book of *Poems of Love and the Unknown* included no sonnet. In discussing this omission Mrs. Hall-Hains spoke of finding the sonnet form difficult. Thereupon, over the luncheon table, we sat writing and talking sonnets for an hour or more. *The Silence* was the happy outcome of our conversation. In turning the pages of *Poems of Love and the Unknown* we find her poetry rhythmical and lyrical. Quoting from *Sometimes*:

" Sometimes I feel your presence in the sunset,
And hear your low tones join the drowsy birds ;
Or see those feet, that crush no flowers or grasses,
Yet tread the way beside the homing herds.

" Sometimes the moonlight shows your supple figure
Through forest dense with bracken and with pine,
And gentle winds will whisper of your coming,
And tell my longing heart your love is mine.

" But always when the night is at its darkest
And sleep has stilled my taut and restless brain,
I know I join you in the starry spaces,
And rest and peace my spirit knows again."

Quoting from *Desire :*

" They tell me in their mournful creeds
To cast out profitless desire,
And by denying human needs
To stamp our passion's fire.

" Without desire, what brush or pen
Could higher inspiration hold ?
Or would a world of science then
Life's mysteries unfold ? "

* * *

" Forgetfulness is heaven's gift to man
To dull remembrance of insistent pain,
And rouse despondency to strive again :
With wider knowledge, greater works to plan,

To build new bridges that shall safely span
The roaring depths all memories contain,
Of sins, poor broken idols, love's disdain,
The world's opprobrium or the Church's ban.
But there are griefs we tremble to forget,
Losses by which our inmost soul was stirred,
Nothing shall heal the wound of that regret,
Time shall not rob us of a single word,
Or steal the smile which we remember yet
Nor drown the echo of a laugh still heard."

" Wraith-like mists are stirring in the glade,
Grey, palid ghosts of Night but newly dead,
And in the silence of their phantom tread
The song of birds sounds hushed and half afraid.
The dreaming dew lies heavy on each blade
Of drowsy grass, on every hedge the jewelled web
Of countless waiting spiders is outspread,
As yet unlit, in gloomy ambuscade.
A wakeful sighing stirs among the trees
As shafts of sunlight gild the brightening hill :
Returning life comes speeding down the breeze
And calls that all their destinies fulfil :
The voice of man, the murmur of the bees
Alike obey the All-pervading Will."

" As driftwood, tossed upon some lonely shore
Which none may see, or seeing will reclaim,
Returns at ebbing tide from whence it came,
More worn and fretted than it was before,
So I, in fruitless searchings to explore
The thorny paths that guard the road to Fame,
If but to warm my fingers at its flame—
Returned, be-scarred more hopeless than before ;
But you, with kindly word and helpful hand
Have shown the road your own brace feet have pressed ;
Should not the vision of that promised land
Bear me ahead, unswerving, undistressed
By those who laugh and cannot understand
The inner urge which will not be repressed ? "

" We know that nature must her waste restore,
That every dying leaf is still of worth,
That all the lowly things that creep the earth
By death but make her garnered wealth the more
And she with lavish hand must freely pour
Impartial tribute on the weed that grows

As gayly glad as does the perfumed rose,
To deck our hedges or bestrew our shore.
Then can we think the energies of man,
The non-material urge within his brain,
Can be confined to this short earthly span
And reap no knowledge from his present pain;
Does not all nature teach the cosmic plan,
The inner urge will energize again."

We may expect in the coming years something yet more significant from Emily Hall-Hains.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

We find from the recently published *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters*, that the late President had a devout admiration for Wordsworth, and only a lesser one for Milton, Keats, and Shelley. It is gratifying, too, to learn that a man who seemed to the world compounded of lawyer and pedagogue should have been so moved by poetry that he declared —he, a professor of political science—that it was a better foundation for the judgment of affairs than philosophy.

* * *

The conclusion of a poem on Lincoln's mother, by Katherine Garrison Chapin, in the February Scribner's, tells us:

And when she went about her tasks by day
Often an old song echoed in her heart,
And made a rhythm for her moving feet.
But when she sat beside the fire, apart
A little in the shadows, in these long
And sombre winter evenings, she had dreamed
Only of one thing passionately, till it seemed
That every thought within her must belong
Only to this—her happiness, her griefs,
The hopes she held and treasured one by one,
Her deep-felt doubts, and her old firm beliefs
Were centred only on her child . . . her son. . . .

* * *

Archibald Rutledge, who is widely known for his poetry and his nature essays, enters the field of controversial writing with an article, "A Southerner Views Lincoln," in the February number of Scribner's. Mr. Rutledge says Lincoln's reputation is suffering from injudicious praise and that he is undergoing a "dangerous apotheosis." To the same magazine Conrad Aiken, whose first novel, *Blue Voyage*, added fame to his already excellent reputation as a poet, contributes a peculiarly interesting short story.

THOMAS HARDY

THE death of Mr. Thomas Hardy inspired generous tributes of recognition and appreciation, and equally significant of his greatness was the dignified and impressive funeral in Westminster Abbey, at which The Poetry Society was officially represented. Although one eulogy dismissed him as "no poet," a curt judgement which has been passed more deservedly on other contemporaries—it was as a poet that Thomas Hardy fulfilled himself, and was honoured by the more serious organs of public opinion and criticism. His fame is most firmly fixed by his poetry. This reputation was examined and its significance adequately summarised in a leading article in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the conclusion of which we quote:

"With Hardy we can never forget that inner vision or focus of his view, which sets its own print on all that he sees and feels. He called those impressions unadjusted; he never advanced them as a system; yet to us they appear as a whole, and feeling acquires the force of thought in them. An absolute sincerity to his feelings and thoughts was the first quality of the truth in his poetry. His tragic emphasis also has its truth, for those sad or ruthless elements which it reflected are themselves a part of life. But his exploration of reality lies in the use that he made of them. Without that grave harmony of his, without the pity and the strength of mind which can make beauty out of harshness, we may feel now that there would have been a vacant place in English poetry. But the human range of his poetry has, perhaps, something else to tell us; and it is that a poet who sees deeply enough may also—such is the relatedness of things—see widely. So Hardy's poetry, turning from the vastness of Nature, would come back as with a balance-stroke to what is universal in the heart of man. There was nothing so obscure or small that it might not reflect some greatness. He renewed a magic in the prose of life, and his far vistas gave it the strangeness of adventure. We read his poetry, and whatever it may lack it has had the power to make the world look different. By contrasts and by instancy of feeling it brings reality nearer and quickens our awareness of life."

So much else has been published on the occasion of his death, that we have gone abroad for our inevitable Hardy article. Our valued contributor, Dr. Olivero, of Turin University, has a very wide acquaintance with and admiration for English poetry, and has spoken here in warm terms of Hardy's work with the freshness and authority of an international critic. But this foreign appreciation, done at short notice, does not travel far beyond the novels, out of which Hardy developed into poetry and his final and greatest phase as a creative artist. Prof. Olivero's study could not be completed in this issue.

After the articles we shall have the books. The first to reach us is

a record of familiar *Talks with Thomas Hardy at Max Gate*, 1920-1922, by Vere H. Collins (Duckworth, 6*s*.)—a slender volume of one hundred pages setting down in dialogue form the small talk that passed at brief interviews, genial and readable, but revealing no profound remarks or literary dicta or definite attitude towards life.

Miss Helen Gifford, of Benfleet Hall, President of the Sutton Centre of the Poetry Society, supplies the following note on " Thomas Hardy Architect and Writer " :—

Hardy, it is well known, trained and practised as an architect before he made his name as a writer, and it seems easy and not unreasonable to trace the effect of his early training upon his literary work. His novels are no haphazard " slices of life "—a truly dreadful expression, suggesting the butcher rather than the artist ; they are carefully-built edifices, erected according to plan and to scale, with ornament, indeed, but no excrescences. Every character, every episode has its place in the ground-plan of the whole.

It was, no doubt, this that Edouard Rod had in mind when, as has been told elsewhere, he said of Thomas Hardy : " He is the only English novelist that has a sense of construction." And Hardy's pleasure when told of this appreciation proved how high a compliment he considered it ; a sense of construction was obviously a possession that he valued.

The Dynasts, though the preface points out that " no attempt has been made to create that completely organic structure of action . . . demanded in a drama strictly self-contained," yet shows his constructive power perhaps at its greatest. It is a wonderful achievement to produce so monumental a work, with so many episodes, so many characters, yet so complete an effect of unity.

Many of his short poems give me the impression of scenes carved for a frieze : the figures are shown in attitudes that in themselves tell a complete story, without any explanation being given or needed. And the medium used increases the effect.

He wrought in stone—no dainty gem in rhyme,
Intaglio carved with patient skill and care,
No love-knot fashioned for a maiden's wear,
But rugged granite hewn to out-last time.

* * *

Some Notable New Volumes.

An unusual book is Miss Eva Gore-Booth's *The World's Pilgrim* (Longmans), 3*s*. 6*d*. The " Conversations " of which it is comprised occur between personalities as renowned and various as Buddha and Pythagoras, Michelangelo and Pheidias, and the Woman of Samaria and a High Priest. Larger scenes are laid in an Upper Room on Easter Eve, beside the Sepulchre, and at the bedside of Francis of Assisi. In all of them the dialogue is conspicuous for its sympathetic handling, its beauty of diction, and vigour of thought. This last

quality is specially noticeable in the closing words of the S. Francis sketch, "Brother most dear, I do not understand why, but I think that whilst we pray for one another, we need never say farewell"; and in those of a visitor to Giordano Bruno in prison, who says, "I have an idea that the third side (in all controversies) is usually nearest to the truth . . . because it has no opposite." The author's sympathies are clearly with those who break away from traditional convention in art as well as in thought. Michelangelo boasts of his future picture thus, "Nevertheless, I will paint you a picture that you will like. The Blessed Madonna shall be a real, living, strong woman, not a stiff doll, and instead of the bunches of roses and the square carpets and the angels' heads I will paint in the background a frieze of white, naked human figures, living and Greek." There is something moving or poignant in every chapter, but nothing, I think, more so than the description of the freed beasts and birds at the Cleansing of the Temple, as told by the ex-High Priest, and the words that pass between St. John and St. Mary on the first Easter Eve. These passages are, unfortunately, too long for quotation.

The Holy Wells of Orris and Other Poems by R. N. D. Wilson (John Lane, 6*s*.), are written by no unpractised hand. And the thoughts behind the hand that shapes them so finely are mystical and insistent. *Commandment*, the poem chosen for quotation, though of hardly as haunting a quality as the title poem, yet has much beauty and significance.

Never seek to fly from thought,
Though thought should bring thee pain:
Let the grey thorn-tree wind-distraught
Turn to the wind again.

Let the cold lake go glittering far
Along its rocky edge,
And drown the early evening star
Amid the starry sedge.

As winter takes the hazel wood,
As darkness takes the west,
Even so do thou take solitude
And hold her to thy breast.

The re-publishing, in the "Highways and Byways Series" (Scholartis Press, 5*s*.) of some verse by Mrs. Archer Clive, *Nine Poems by V*, is to be commended. But for their discriminate revival many good poems would be entirely lost sight of by the reading public. These poems are worth preserving. There is passion and restraint behind their Victorian elegance of style. We are told that they aroused great interest when first published in 1840, and were appreciatively reviewed by Hartley Coleridge in *The Quarterly*.

Love of the world, that is not in any sense worldliness, is the keynote of the poems of Charles G. D. Roberts, *The Vagrant of Time* (Ryerson

Press). It is the attitude towards life that one had rather hoped for in a man who has studied wild life and laws and found them good. These three verses from *The Good Earth* are, I think, typical of his sentiments :—

O waters, running free
With full, exultant song,
Give me, for outworn dream,
Life that is clean and strong.

O good Earth, warm with youth,
My childhood heart renew.
Make me elate, sincere,
Simple and glad as you.

O springing things of green,
O waiting things of bloom,
O winging things of air,
Your lordship now resume).

though *Under the Pillars of the Sky* show his abilities as a poet to better advantage :

Under the pillars of the sky
I played at life, I knew not why.

The grave recurrence of the day
Was matter of my trivial play.

The solemn stars, the sacred night,
I took for toys of my delight,

Till now, with startled eyes, I see
The portents of Eternity.

The Professor, by M. K. Bradby (Cornish Bros., 5*s.* 3*d.*). This long soliloquoy on unrequited love, though cleverly handled and well sustained, becomes a little tiresome before the end. This is probably a fault of length for there is not sufficient dramatic quality to hold the reader's attention while the Professor analyzes his emotions in eighty-eight stanzas, even though these same stanzas hold a good deal of subtlety and often end with a piquant epigram. This one is as neatly fashioned as any :

Once was I made a fool, deceived in you ;
Chilled by a formal manner's stately guise ;
Till love uprushing leapt into my eyes ;
And then I saw you, lovable and true.

Which, think you, moves the wise to greater mirth :
Captains of wealth who win and worship gold,
Deeming the soul of goodness bought, and sold ;
Or Savage Man who dances on the earth ?

Which, think you, seems to God the greater dunce :
The whole of heart, or he who suffered once ?

From Percy Lund and Humphries come two small volumes : *The Window and Other Poems* by Laetitia Withall and *The King's Daughters* by Marion Reid. The former is a charming collection of poems showing the author in many moods, whimsical, fanciful, and serious. The mystical pieces at the end of the book are perhaps more mature in workmanship but the earlier verses make a stronger appeal to the ordinary mind. There is sadness, too, behind many of them. One detects the prison bars of circumstance in *Down Cheyne Walk :*

I met the sea down Cheyne Walk . . .
The river tides ran high ;
A laden barge went slowly by
Washing up drift of stick and stalk ;
Two seagulls shrilled in scolding talk ;
And murmuring there against the wall
Sounded the old, the water call.

It drowned my eyes with dreams ; a haze
Blurred all the Chelsea Street ;
My hand gripped fast the tugging sheet,
I breathed the salt of sea-swung days
And swam the peacock Cornish bays
As, leaning there on Chelsea wall,
I heard the old, the water call.

The quaintly retrospective *Patchwork Quilt* has already found its way into an American Anthology.

Marion Reid is scarcely so successful with her book of prose. Her appeal to girls and women to become true Daughters of the King is very sincere, but the terms of appeal are often so sentimental in expression that they defeat their own end. One also wishes that her arguments were more convincing, for the rules of life that she would teach are sound and wholesome. The uncommon illustrations to this book are by R. O. Pearson, brother to the author. Both books are conspicuous for their pleasing type and artistic production.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

* * *

New-comers among poetry publishers are Messrs. Victor Gollancz, Ltd., who announce for publication during the spring *The Vortex*, which, they believe, will place Mr. Redwood Anderson in the ranks of those poets whose work is not only talked about, but is eagerly acquired. This collection of poems is claimed to be a descriptive and imaginative interpretation of modern city life, in which " the pictures are vivid and the thought is both straightforward and of intense reality." Messrs. Victor Gollancz also have in active preparation a

collection of *Great English Plays*, of more than 1,000 pages, in which "the whole of English dramatic literature is passed in review (with the exception of that of our own time) through a series of typical examples, varying from the beginnings of the form in England to the end of the eighteenth century. Never before has the lover of our literature and drama had placed within his reach, in one handy volume, and at so low a price (8s. 6d.), the heritage of our dramatic literature." Another new Gallancz will be Mr. Humbert Wolfe's latest poems, *This Blind Rose*. Later in the season the same firm will publish Mr. Wolfe's first volume of literary criticism, *Dialogues and Monologues*. The opening essay in this volume is the "Craft of Verse" lecture which Mr. Humbert Wolfe delivered at Oxford from the Professor of Poetry's Chair last autumn. "This essay in dramatic form contains æsthetic criticism of great importance, and is particularly valuable for the author's treatment, which is as clear-headed as it is witty, of the so-called 'modernist' movement."

* * *

The Scholartis Press, in pursuance of its policy to produce fine and unusual work in a fine manner, will publish next month, with the title of "Sextette," two beautiful editions of French Symbolist poetry, done into English by Dorothy Martin.

* * *

On 8th January, 1905, the late Lord Oxford wrote to one of our eminent poets, saying: "Perhaps it may interest you to know that, on the death of Lord Tennyson, I strongly urged upon Mr. Gladstone —unless the office was to be there and then abolished—your claims to the Laureateship." That poet was Sir William Watson, of whose great works Thornton Butterworth are publishing a new selection early in April. Sir William Watson has selected over 200 items for the volume and has written a new Introductory Ode.

* * *

The title of Mrs. Irving Bell's second book noticed in our last issue should have been given as *Rustlings*, published by the St. Catherine Press, from whence comes also *By the Nursery Fire*.

* * *

The Cambridge University Press will shortly publish a study of *The Laws of Verse*, by Mr. J. C. Andersen, the object of which is to state simply the principles of accentual versification.

* * *

It is intended to hold the final of The Shakespeare Recitals in London on April 23—Shakespeare's and St. George's Day. Readers are invited to interest themselves in this distinctive event.

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The Celtic Poetry meeting arranged by Mrs. Grace Rhys, editor of the Celtic Anthology, will be held on March 23rd, at 19 Grosvenor Square, W., by kind permission of Lady Beecham,—admission by ticket only, obtainable from the General Secretary of the Poetry, Society, 16 Featherstone Building, W.C. 1.

POETS AND READERS: A REPLY TO MR. CASSON.

THE poet writes primarily for his own satisfaction; he has seen or apprehended something with an intensity so deep that he feels that here at last is a reality beside which all common experience fades into empty shadow. He tries to crystallize this experience to a poem, using all the beauty of form and euphony to express that which logic and science cannot say. Just as his experience is intuitive as well as intellectual, so must the expression possess loveliness as well as clarity if it is to reconstruct that first ecstasy.

We who read the writings of others dismiss as mere verse all that fails to find in ourselves some answering echo. The poet who puts his work before us expects us to bring to its study an active and impartial mind and a keen æsthetic sense. In turn, he must be prepared to meet criticism; we demand, firstly, that the poem shall communicate the experience to us; secondly that this experience shall possess a value, and this value, though personal, must be permanent.

Some of us may find this value in the contemplation of nature :—

> "I saw the blackthorn blaze
> Like wreaths of moonlit snow,
> Where the budded leaf delays
> And the violet woodlands glow;"

some in a mystical immanence :—

> "See a World in a Grain of Sand
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
> And Eternity in an hour."

It may be found in human tragedy, a prisoned king crying to his murderers :—

> "Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus,
> When for her sake I ran at tilt in France."

Perhaps the iron future will compel us to wring a mystic beauty from ugliness itself :—

> "The red-eyed scavengers are creeping
> From Kentish Town and Golder's Green."

In poetry no more than in music is there an absolute standard, but there seems to be a hierarchy of appreciations. Sullivan, Wagner, and Beethoven, each has his followers and each group of followers smile indulgently at those lower in the series and are puzzled by the "intellectuals" above. The boy in time grows tired of Kipling, Swinburne, Scott and even Tennyson; he finds their thunder empty and their lightning scarcely illuminating. Above these fallen gods he finds his Milton. Then he discovers others who startle him with swift perceptions of truth he has himself seen dimly and afar. Marvell, Coleridge, Shelley, Thompson, Donne, Keats, Wordsworth,

Housman . . . in all these he finds philosophies and lovely mysteries.

From time to time some of the naïve go over to the intellectuals and mystics: none return. A poet must be judged by his readers; how near the sanctuary may they approach? Shakespeare and Homer, these appeal to all levels of comprehension. You can judge a man's appreciation of these when he tells you what other books he reads. Explicit.

Forest Hall. MICHAEL ROBERTS.

SHAKESPEARE'S PHILOSOPHY

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—In justice to Shakespeare, I am confident you will give space, however brief, to a different view of his philosophy from that attributed to him on page 66 of January-February number. Shakespeare's claim to immortality is that he belongs to all men and to all time. Adherents of opposite creeds and schools of thought have long sought to enlist him as a supporter of their pet isms, but his genius has outsoared their narrow confines. Whether "We are such stuff As dreams are made *of*" should read "on" I will not now dispute, but I *do* protest against the "on" version being used to claim Shakespeare as a supporter of freewill, or indeterminism. In Hamlet I find

> "His will is not his own;
> For he himself is subject to his birth."

This is the very essence of determinism!

It would, indeed, be very strange if such a master-mind did not perceive that human will and human action, are, like everything else, subject to the inexorable law of causality, even as did Germany's greatest poet-philosopher who tells us

> "By eternal laws
> Of iron ruled
> Must all fulfil
> The cycle of
> Their destiny. (*Goethe.*)

Havant. LOFTUS DALE.

"PROMETHEUS IN PICCADILLY."

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

SIR,—Other readers, in addition to myself, must be grateful for the recognition accorded "a distinguished long poem." Your generous review of a work hitherto unknown to me sent me—as good reviews should, but frequently fail to do or lead to disappointment and sad questionings of taste and judgment—to the book, which enthralled me like a powerful novel, revived the Promethean fires of the imagination,

and inspired latent nobility of feeling and aspiration—a Greek tragedy in a modern setting, thereby bringing life into contact with poetry and rekindling the ardours of youth. Only great poetry, vital work, could have this power. I would like this poem, with its stark but not mawkish realism and sentiment as well as its majesty and beauty and wise philosophy, to be examined from many aspects, but I am not a reviewer, only a reader appreciative of the independence and courage of THE POETRY REVIEW. The poet's own achievement is finely defined in *The Third Stasimon*—one of many things I would like to quote from this remarkable blending of lyric and narrative verse :

'Tis for the poet to create
The moth as duly as the star,
To understudy sovran Fate,
And sing of all things as they are.

The sordid and the splendid keep
One feast alike upon his page ;
There must the shallows mock the deep,
And there the fool o'ercrow the sage.

Ask more than but a song of youth
And glamour from the poet's heart ;
He only sings a demi-truth
Who sets false limits to his art.

Yours, etc.,

*London, W.*1. JOHN RILEY.

" THE EEL."

To the Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Amongst the press cuttings which I have received I find one containing a review of my book, *The Eel*, in which your Reviewer expresses doubts as to whether *The Eel* would ever have been written had not Mr. Rupert Brooke written his *Fish*. I should like instantly to set his doubts at rest.

I read *The Fish* some years ago when it was first published in a first edition of Mr. Brooke's poems, and had forgotten its purport completely until broadcasting last winter with Miss Cathleen Nesbitt. In so far as I am aware *The Eel* has no connection with Mr. Rupert Brooke's *Fish* in any sort of way. It differs in its philosophy, in metre, and in expression, both metaphysical and poetic. Since reading the review I have re-read *The Fish* and cannot trace anything similar whatsoever to my poem, as whilst the former is written from a somewhat Aristotlean point of view, the author taking up his mental abode within the person of a fish ; mine is written from a purely Catholic point of view, where the eel merely serves as a symbol—metaphysical if you will, but much more physical than conscious. I

do not usurp the personality of the eel; I merely demonstrate that the approach of a soul humiliated by the greatness of God could possibly be likened to the movement of an eel creeping out of the depths of the ocean on to the land.

I do not mind your Reviewer begrudging me commendation, but I do dislike the suggestion of plagiarism, even mental, being made.

Incidentally, it might perhaps interest him to know that I used at one time to breed fish and have ever since I can remember been interested in the study of Natural Science. In my boyhood I was one of the few set aside to attend to the Zoological Gardens at Eton, and there is scarcely a Zoo in the world that I have not visited. He may also be unaware of the fact that I have written a certain amount (not poetic) concerning the habits of fish, and I would like to refer him to a letter of mine in *Hutchinson's Magazine* on the question of eels and climbing perch and land crabs in general.

Whereas I am fundamentally fond of animal life in all its forms, I can assure you that Mr. Brooke took, in comparison, an almost cursory interest in the animal kingdom.

This poem has caused what I suppose should be a flattering amount of comment in three continents. The amount of authors to whom it is compared is both surprising and interesting. Some reviewers attribute it directly to Blake, some to Edgar Allen Poe, some to Francis Thompson, and some to John Donne, and I am credited with having read at least twice the number of volumes that I have, and been inspired by a far larger number of poets, including St. John of the Cross, than I would have thought possible, and with whom I have but a bowing acquaintance, if this phrase is permitted.

Yours truly,
EVAN MORGAN.

P.S.—If you want more news about *The Eel* it may interest you to hear that the actual poem has been translated into German and was given two pages to itself in a Catholic German paper called *Germania*. There I was supposed to derive a great deal from my friend, Wilfred Childe, whose work I much admire, but again with whom I must protest I have no resemblance either of technique or ideas, save that we both belong to the common faith of the Catholic Church.

My motive in choosing the eel as a symbol is the fact that it is neither a fish, nor an insect, nor a reptile, nor an animal precisely and accurately speaking, although technically speaking, of course, it is classified under the fish species, and in this complexity of its make-up it bears a strong resemblance to that sub-consciousness of the human mind which, although admitting and worshipping God, fails to command the flesh and fully conform with the divine-made laws. Moreover, the eel being able to live both on land and under water, is very symbolic of the fact that the spirit can live both on earth and in Heaven—on earth owing to a corporeal body, and in Heaven owing to the gift of prayer and meditation—at one and the same time. Also

the progress of the eel through water is slower than that of the well-finned fish, as, for instance, the trout or the salmon, and its progress on land is equally retarded by the fact that it has no legs and that, unlike the serpent, it has got gills and a tiny pair of pectoral fins, which act as a brake on the sinuous motion adopted by the snake. Its slow movement up through the sea, through dark and rocky depths, often dimmed with weed, is to my mind symbolic of the progress of the spirit through the turmoils of this earth into the higher light of God's presence.

Also it is well known that eels, on arriving either on the sandy shore out of the ocean, or just within the mouth of the river, are exhausted and lie there "patiently" before progressing either up the river which they have chosen, or across the sandy banks and grassy fields to some tranquil haven of rest.

Moreover, the eel is the most mysterious creature since science is not yet sure either where it is born or where it dies, or how far it is capable of travelling by land or water. Some even hold that it visits England by following the Gulf Stream to our country's shores, thereby again resembling in many ways the elusiveness of the spirit in avoiding complete apprehension —E.M.

* * *

[Our comment on Mr. Morgan's latest volume of poems has had the gratifying effect of drawing an interesting letter on the origins o a notable poem which has apparently gone round the world and set reviewers guessing about derivations. We do not consider our comment necessarily suggested plagiarism, but that Mr. Morgan presumably was acquainted with Mr. Brooke's artificial poem and had got the idea, so far as subject is concerned, therefrom—that Mr. Morgan virtually said to himself, "I, too, will imagine myself a fish, will assume the consciousness of a fish, but my attitude and treatment will be different from that adopted by Mr. Brooke." Mr. Morgan's familiarity with animal life (unknown to the reviewer, who hopes he writes with insight and penetration although not acquainted with corroborative facts) supports rather than refutes this view, although Mr. Morgan now dispels this notion.—ED.]

* * *

Mr. Stanton A. Coblentz, whose frank, searching study of modern literary expression in America was dealt with in the "Dynamics of American Poetry" in our last November issue, writes: "Let me commend you on your sound and discerning article on Masefield's narrative poetry. You express well and understandingly that which should have been expressed long before; I applaud you for being able to come so simply down to poetic fundamentals. As one who is profoundly interested in poetry but who has been appalled by a vast quantity of slovenly criticism and, in particular, by the tendency to confuse the realistic with the poetic, I cannot but feel that you have done a genuine service by your article." Mr. Coblentz suggests

" that we are at one in our fundamental point of view toward poetry." We do hope the POETRY REVIEW expresses sound fundamental opinions, on which all serious co-workers may agree. By the way, Mr. Coblentz's own narrative poem, *The Lone Adventurer*, in which he endeavours to escape the trivialities of the moment and to delve into that timeless realm which is the realm of all poetry, was reviewed by Mrs. Bartlett in Vol. XVII of THE POETRY REVIEW.

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We understand that Mr. Alfred Noyes has been received into the Roman Catholic Church. Other recent poet converts include Mr. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. Theodore Maynard, and the Hon. Evan Morgan.

* * *

A piquant extract from the *Evening Standard* of exactly one hundred years ago may be read with some aptness in connection with the revival of similar tendencies in recent years—and not only in regard to Byron :—" A letter has been received from Mr. Leigh Hunt on the subject of his ' Lord Byron and his Contemporaries.' A more pitiful production we never remember reading. The miserable conceit and egregious folly which breathe through every paragraph are forgotten in a feeling of contemptuous compassion for degradation so voluntary and so unconcealed. Of such books as this, published by Mr. Hunt, there can but be one opinion—they are inherently mean. A prurient itch for degrading gossip is one of the most disgraceful marks of our current literature : and the only good that we can foresee from the disgusting flood of confessions and other eaves-dropping compositions is that our gentlemen may be rendered cautious as to whom they associate with."

* * *

The Hymn Society of America has announced the awarding of $100 as a prize to Miss May Rowland of Eastbourne, England, for the best Airmen's Hymn, and has made public its text, which follows :

God of the shining hosts that range on high,
Lord of the Seraphs serving day and night,
Hear us for these, our squadrons of the sky,
And give to them the shelter of Thy might.

Thine are the arrows of the storm-cloud's breath,
Thine, too, the tempest or the zephyr still ;
Take in Thy keeping those who, facing death,
Bravely go forth to do a nation's will.

High in the trackless space that paves Thy throne,
Claim by Thy love these souls in danger's thrall ;
Be Thou their Pilot through the great unknown,
Then shall they mount as eagles and not fall.

The society announces that another prize of $100 would be given to the person offering the best hymn tune for Miss Rowland's words.

THE DELIVERY OF SHAKESPEARE'S LINES

THE discussion raised by the publication of the winning design for the new Shakespeare Memorial Theatre as to the type of playhouse most suitable to honour the poet brings up inevitably the question of the delivery of Shakespearean dialogue. Perhaps the greatest recent contribution to the true appreciation of Shakespeare has been made by Mr. William Poel, when he urged, among other Elizabethan revivals, a rapid, fluent, and essentially *musical* delivery of the lines. But of all Mr. Poel's suggestions this seems to have been least understood and most neglected, the physical conditions of the Elizabethan playhouse being the focus of attention, rather than the *results* of those conditions which, by judicious study, may be reproduced in a suitable theatre to-day.

The most important point to understand about Shakespearean verse is that it is *non-declamatory*. In this, of course, it differs essentially from the classics of France, and even of Germany, and it is this characteristic which caused it to be misunderstood and slighted in the eighteenth century, when the declamation of the French stage and the heroic couplet and Alexandrine of English verse held sway. Shakespearean verse, then, must not be declaimed, but *spoken*, and, in general, spoken fairly quickly; the correct emphasis must be most carefully sought, the speaker then swinging from emphasis to emphasis as from pole to pole, letting the intervening phrase be taken as lightly as is consonant with clear and telling diction. Accurate phrasing is, of course, of the same paramount importance as in all speaking and singing—and is usually accorded a similar neglect!

It is a point not, apparently, noted, that the delivery of Shakespearean prose needs even more experience and understanding than that of his verse, and those who have attained some mastery in the verse-speaking are frequently put out in the prose dialogue, such as is to be found in *As You Like It*, in the Falstaff scenes, etc.; a very nimble tongue is required to give due point and savour to Shakespeare's prose—as it is, also, for Shaw's—and the absence of rhyme or metre leaves the half-trained and inexperienced speaker nothing to rest on at all.

The relationship between the type of building and the delivery of Shakespeare's lines in that building is not so remote as may at first appear. Shakespeare adapted his technique to the physical conditions of the playhouse of his time, and that technique cannot be understood apart from those conditions. The Elizabethan playhouse called for continuity of action and for a certain intimacy between actor and audience which is impracticable in the pictorial theatre of the eighteenth century. This intimacy involved a delicate, fluent, and varied *speaking* of the lines, impossible of attainment in a large modern theatre from behind the proscenium arch.

It is no antiquarian desire that seeks to encourage these *results* of Elizabethan theatrical architecture in the theatre of to-day; it is the *spirit* of the Shakespearean stage we want to reproduce, not the mere bricks and mortar replica of a particular playhouse. We want to

master that highly-accomplished technique induced by the material conditions of his age, in order to express more truly the essence and content of his work, which is indeed not " of an age, but for all time."

LILIAN E. SIMPSON.

The Ben Greet Academy.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S GOLD MEDAL FOR VERSE-SPEAKING.

The Examinations Advisory Board has made the following recommendations with reference to the examinations for the Poetry Society's gold medal in verse-speaking, and they have been approved and adopted by the General Council :—

1. That the minimum age of the Gold Medal candidates be raised to 18.

2. That there be three examiners for the Gold Medal—viz. : The Society's chief or other ordinary examiner, together with the Lady Margaret Sackville or other literary person nominated by her, failing her ability to attend, and an authority on phonetics.

3. That Gold Medal candidates be required to present a selection from Milton, Shakespeare, Wordsworth or Browning, the selection not to occupy more than five minutes, the second piece to be left to the candidates' unfettered choice as hitherto.

4. That the Lady Margaret Gold Medal be continued by the Society but that it be made a separate and distinct annual competition open to any holder of the Society's Gold Medal only, irrespective of the year in which the gold medal was gained.

5. That the Gold Medal Examinations be held twice in each year, in May and November, and the Lady Margaret competition in December this year and when it may be found desirable and convenient in following years, and that for this separate event the Judge shall be a poet.

7. It is further suggested as a direction to the Examiners that a reading test be more frequently resorted to, especially for the Silver Medal, for the purpose of ascertaining how a candidate interprets a favourite but not specially prepared poem.

* * *

The Rev. Dr. Kirtlan, B.A., B.D., etc., vice-president of The Poetry Society, the translator of *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain* and *The Green Knight*, *Pearl*, and other gems of Early English Poetry, lecturer on Shakespeare and other English poets, and lately lecturer on the Drama for the Hull Education Committee, has been appointed one of The Poetry Society's Examiners in the art of reading and speaking verse, and will be available for provincial engagements this spring. For particulars of this invaluable aid to the promotion of " a clearer, deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it " please apply to The Secretary, The Poetry Society (Incorporated), 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT

Another Premium Editor is recalled after a long vacation. He returns to a difficult, tedious, and delicate task; yet with a certain pride in many years' association with THE POETRY REVIEW and its unbroken continuity; and, moreover, with the interest of a sympathetic veteran whose own work carried off Poetry Society honours —awarded by a redoubtable adjudicator in connection with one of the most remarkable events promoted by the Society.

He was especially happy in being, as he believed, of some small service to that most distinguished Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW, Stephen Phillips; and is further gratified to have been regarded as affording some little encouragement, at any rate, to that famous man's capable collaborator and successor in editorial control.

This temporary resumption of the Premium Editor's responsibilities quite naturally leads to a comparison of present poetic values with those of a decade ago. He returns to find more amateur, though less *amateurish*, work than heretofore, and to make acquaintance, in this department, with an entirely new band of contributors.

These may be regarded as neo-Georgian in literary age, but their work, so far as he can judge from the many excellent MSS. now submitted, moves along traditional lines, and indicates no abrupt departure, either in form or spirit, from time-honoured standards of poetic Art.

Post-war poetry, as exemplified in the MSS. piled up around him from all parts of the world, is not, he finds, in revolt against such standards. There are apparent, however, certain wholesome activities in the direction, mainly, of exploring the further metrical possibilities of the language. Such activities are vitalizing, and should not be discouraged as regards perfecting, or rather developing, the instrument of poetic expression.

But it must not be forgotten that the fundamental element of poetry is poetic thought. This can usually find adequate metrical expression in conformity with the usage of the great masters from Chaucer onwards, without stifling one's poetic gifts by novel experiments in awkward prosody, or meandering aimlessly in so-called "free verse" which so often proves inimical to true poetic art. In short, those who have poetic light to shine before men should never be tempted to hide it wilfully under the bushel of metrical posturing or unmetrical ineptitude.

Hero-worship is a feature of some of the current contributions to the Fellowship. Of these, it is singularly appropriate that two of the most effective are entitled *Thomas Hardy*, 1840-1928, by A. J G.

Russell, London, and *Hardy The Compassionate*, by J. Marion Soper, Newton Abbot. Each is distinctive of its type, but on balance we incline to the latter, a well-framed sonnet, to which we award one half the premium, dividing the other half between A. J. G. Russell's striking three-verse tribute to Hardy and an impressive centenary tribute to John Bunyan, entitled *The Prisoner*, by A. D. L. Wilson.

In the "Highly Commended" class, although other competitors come very close to the winning post, we should single out for the special honours—Margot K. Mackillop Brown, Southampton; E. A. Cullabine, Worksop; John Willwyn, Gobowen (Shropshire); Margaret E. Rose, Derby; B. Eve, Weybridge; and Petronella O'Donnell, Burnham-on-Sea.

Others worthy of special mention in this class are: Loftus Dale, Havant; G. Fauvel, Enfield Chase; Anne Kelledy Gilbert, Washington, D.C.; H. Derezinska, Warsaw; Nancy Pollok (Mrs. Firkins); Glasgow; Bertha M. Skeat, Sedbergh; Dulcie Eden (Mrs. Osborne), Silcoates, Yorks; and N. K. Cruickshank, Bury.

Of no mean order were many of the other contributions also. Among those specially worthy of commendation were: Gwen Polgreen, Dennet; T. E. Casson, Newton-le-Willows; M. W. Fairlie, Edinburgh; J. W. Nance, Bromborough; Margaret Ormiston, London, S.W.; R. W. Angus, Chippenham; Irene Bell, Stockton-on-Tees; Hughes Atkinson, Blackheath; Victoria Slade, Lingfield, Surrey; Vera I. Arlett, Worthing; Noel Allport, Polesworth; Thos. Bates Crawford, Paisley; Silvia Dobson, Durham; Marjorie Lousley, Rye; Esther Samms, Luton; J. W. Anderson, Skegness; F. V. Luxmoore, Burnham-on-Sea; Elizabeth F. Alden, Haddenham; B. Annakin, Wetherby; Michael Roberts, Forest Hall; G. E. Merrick, Warminster; Mrs. Baline, Bath; Sister Audrey, Warminster; Richard Ullmann, St. John's Wood; Francis Edwin, South Shields; Helen B. G. Sutherland, West Newport; Nina Lassen, Golder's Green; E. Joyce Harrison, Lincoln; Thorley H. R. Orde, Tobago; Beatrice Eve, Weybridge; Margaret Ormiston, London; Edward Doyle, New York; Frederick Kemp, Catford; A. T. Riddell, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Walter K. Lewis, Ramsgate, J. Purdie, Paisley; K. L. MacCuaig, Birmingham; Leo Cox, Montreal; A. C. Ococks, Kensington; M. R. Dowson, Watford; G. W. Eustace, Arundel; Iris Potter, Leigh-on-Sea; and A. E. Mackay, Chelsea.

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An old member of our Fellowship, Mr. Francis E. Hodder, M.A., has organized and become secretary of a South Shields Centre of The Poetry Society, with which we hope Tyneside members will associate themselves if they find it convenient. Mr. Hodder has published two small volumes of verse and contributed to *Poetry of To-day* and other magazines, and has found a place for modern poetry in the columns of local weekly newspapers.

Poems from Mrs. Eric Bruce's little collection of *Sussex Songs* have been read and quoted in public by unknown admirers in Canada.

Mr. R. G. MacDonald, of St. John's, Newfoundland, in renewing his membership subscription for the seventeenth time—he has been associated with this fellowship continuously since 1912, a fact that reminds us that the Society still includes many original 1909 members —writes " The need for The Poetry Society and for poetry was never greater, when crass materialism is still rampant—apparently more rampant than ever—when it has even invaded the Church and seeks to overthrow spiritual religion! Long may The Poetry Society contend for the higher values—for more beauty, more healthy emotion, more spiritual vision, is still a great need in our nation."

Our old confrere, John Helston, returns with a poem to the February *English Review*, which " discovered " him in succession to the Masefield boom.

Contributors are reminded that entries for the Lewis War Poem premium must be received by the first day of Spring—see p. 69.

The Civilization Poem Contest Awards.

The winners of the $100 Civilization Poem Contest, the twelfth international poetry contest held under the auspices of the American Section of The Poetry Review, have been selected from over one thousand entries,and are :—

First ($40), Mary Alethea Woodward, Portland, Ore.
Second ($20), Walter K. Lewis, Ramsgate, England.
Third ($10), Henry Mead Bland, San José, California.
Fourth ($10), Emma B. King, Indianapolis, Indiana.
Fifth ($10), Helena Derezinska, Polish Consulate, Strasburg, Alsace, France.

In offering the prizes for the best poems on Civilization in honour of Admiral Peary, the discoverer of the North Pole, the International Science Forum, which was founded in 1917 by Peary, sought to obtain the poet's view on these profound questions :

(1) What is Civilization ? Is it an ideal, a principle, a doctrine, a code, a goal, a means to an end, or something to be aspired or attained ?

(2) Or is it a material condition, a sum total, an outcome, something already attained ?

(3) Or is it a reflection of the life of an age or period, whose existence ceases as the age or period passes, becoming only an historic fact ?

The judges of the Civilization Poem Contest were : Edwin Markham, America's Poet Laureate ; Bruce Barton, author of *The Man Nobody Knows*, *The Book Nobody Knows*, etc. ; Professor Wm. Lyon Phelps of Yale, author of *The Advance of English Poetry*, *Essays on American Authors*, etc. ; Henry Woodhouse, president of the International Science Forum ; Colonel A. A. Anderson, the noted artist ; Albert Edward Wiggam, author of *The New Decalogue of Science* ; Mrs. William A. Bartlett, chairman of the Committee.

The commended competitors will be announced in our next issue.

THE "LEADER" CONTEST AWARDS.

The winner of the Contest for poems about leaders, the fourteenth of the international poetry contests held under the auspices of the American Section of THE POETRY REVIEW, has been found in Edwin Markham, the dean of American poets, who has been awarded the $100 for his poem, *The Leader*, which was the best of over 600 poems entered in the contest. The next largest number of votes were cast for the sonnet *Lindbergh*, written by Hon. Wendell Phillips Stafford, Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

Other poets who received a large number of votes are—Miss Ruth E. Henderson, Washington, D.C.; Stanton A. Coblentz; Professor Henry Mead Bland; Miss Angela Morgan; J. W. Nance, Bromborough, Cheshire; Mrs. Faith Van Valkenburgh Vilas, New York; Benjamin Collins Woodbury, Boston; Jeanne Robert Foster, New York; Miss Julia Dabney, Brookline, Mass.; Commander Bellairs, M.P.; Petronella O'Donnell, Burnham-on-Sea; Madame Helena Derezinska, Warsaw; Evelyn M. Watson, Buffalo; G. T. Evans; Georgina B. Wells, New York; Dr. Mary Brent Whiteside, Atlanta, Georgia; Miss Inez Temple, West Hartford, Conn.; Miss Aline E. Hughes, Henderson, North Carolina; Mrs. T. T. Wells; Miss Madeline Mason-Manheim, New York; Mrs. Ellen Colter Johnson, Cincinnatti, Ohio; Mary Noble Allen, Philadelphia, Pa.; Mary Siegrist, New York; Zora Cheever, New York; Clyde Robertson, Reading, Pa.

The leaders chosen in the poems include *Jesus of Nazareth, Washington, Lincoln, Napoleon, Peary, Joan of Arc, Plato, Achilles, Alexander, Percy Stickney Grant* (in whose memory the contest was held), *Lindbergh, Gunemier, Faraday, Edison.* The judges of the "Leader" Contest were: Mrs. William A. Bartlett, Chairman of the Premiums Committee of the Poetry Society; Mrs. Nicholas Murray Butler, the Lady Maud Warrender (President of the Poetry Society); Professor Curtis Hidden Page, V.P.; Mr. Archibald Flower, Governor of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon; Hon. George Wharton Pepper, former United States Senator; Mr. Henry Woodhouse, President of the Aerial League of America; Hewitt H. Howland, Editor of *The Century Magazine;* Miss Virginia Watson, Editor, *Harper's Magazine*; and Professor Joseph Alexander, The Ohio State University.

Edwin Markham's winning poem follows:

THE LEADER

Earth listens for the coming of his feet;
The hushed Fates lean expectant from their seat.
He will be calm and reverent and strong,
And, carrying in his words the fire of song,
Will send a hope upon these weary men,
A hope to make the heart grow young again,
A cry to comrades scattered and afar;

Be constellated, star by circling star ;
Give to all mortals justice and forgive :
Licence must die that liberty may live.
Let love shine through the fabric of the State—
Love deathless, Love whose other name is Fate.
Fear not : we cannot fail—
The Vision will prevail.
Truth is the Oath of God, and, sure and fast,
Through Death and Hell holds onward to the last.

Mr. Justice Wendell's poem follows :

LINDBERGH

Lone eagle of the wild Atlantic plain,
  Tall, laughing boy with sun-glints in your eyes,
Playfellow of the lightning and the rain,
  Co-sentry with old watchers in the skies,
Light-hearted prologue to the epic muse.
  Glad re-uniter of long-riven parts,
Bright Hermes of the nations, bringing news
  Of love still flaming in all human hearts !

" Do I deserve all this ? " Oh, more, far more,
  More than the grateful world can ever pay.
A fouler fog than hides Newfoundland's shore
  Your little bark's propeller whirled away.
    Fly on, above the mist of sordid things :
    Rise, like the sun, with healing in your wings !

$100 FOR POEMS ABOUT FLYING ACHIEVEMENTS

A price of $100 for the best poems about flying achievements has been offered through the American editor of the POETRY REVIEW, by Mrs. Charles D. Dickey, the Chairman of the Poe Cottage Committee, through whose efforts the Poe Cottage was saved and is maintained for posterity. Mrs. Dickey's gift is the fifteenth prize offered through the American Section of the POETRY REVIEW for international poetry contests. Competitors may select their own subject and deal with the conquest of the air generally, or with one or more such stupendous achievements as the transatlantic, North Pole, transpolar, transcontinental, round the world, and other great flights of the airmen of all nations. The only limitation is that the poems must not exceed 56 lines, the length of four sonnets being selected as a limit. Entries must reach Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, Editor, American Section of THE POETRY REVIEW, 299 Park Avenue, New York, before October 1st. The general premium rules and conditions apply and the decision of the Editors in awarding the premium must be accepted as final.

A correspondent, pointing out that Matthew Arnold, in his lines on "Kensington Gardens" speaks of limes in a "lone open glade," at the end of which pine trees stayed the eye, asks if anyone has been able to identify this glade or seen or heard of pine trees in the gardens.

The Vice-President of The American Poetry Circle for Minnesota, who "enjoys the POETRY REVIEW very much," sends us the following definition of Poetry:

> "Poetry is the 'Art of Thought' expressed in linguistic beauty, according with timely orchestral waves of light, the entirety composed by Mind, Heart, and Soul of man."

The family of the late Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, the first life-member and for several years President of The Poetry Society, have endowed (in conjunction with the Council of The Poetry Society) a W. F. Rawnsley Memorial Gold Medal, to be presented annually for the reading of poetry. It will be awarded in open competition, in which any member of the Society may take part, and selected readers may be put forward by schools and other groups.

Lord Desborough has become a vice-president of The Poetry Society.

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1. The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded in recognition of "highly commended."

2. Not more than *four* poems may be submitted at the same time.

3. All MSS. submitted for these premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," the Poets' Fellowship, THE POETRY REVIEW Office, before April 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon, and, if criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

4. Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and *the name and address* of the competitor must be attached to each MS.

5. Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

6. Contributors may enter any of the premium competitions as "hors concours" competitors, and the Editor may place in the "hors concours" class the work of any competitor who has gained a major award during the preceding twelve months provided he considers the work of any other competitor is at least equal in merit. The award of a premium shall not in itself disqualify a competitor from competing and being awarded premium honours immediately thereafter.

7. The decisions of the Editor must be accepted as final and no correspondence respecting the awards can be entered into (pars. 4, 5, 6, 7 apply to all THE POETRY REVIEW premium offers).

We deeply regret to have to place on record the death (on Boxing Day), of the Rev. Richard Lawson Gales, V.P., one of the original members of the Poetry Society and of the General Council. Mr. Gales at the inaugural meeting of March 9th, 1909, proposed the resolution formally constituting the Society. He was a Newdigate Prizeman who allowed his rare and original gifts of expression to lie dormant for many years, but encouraged by Lady Gwendoline Cecil and other chance visitors to his small rural parish, the shy country parson, who was a monkish mediaevalist to whom modern methods and manners remained strange and unacceptable, began to contribute verse and prose to the *National Review*, the *Speaker*, the *Daily News* and other papers, and he subsequently published several volumes of delightful and whimsical poems, including the fascinating one with the title of "David in Heaven," and collections of delightful prose essays, "A Parson in Arcady," dealing with the idiosyncrasies, wit and wisdom of his rural parishioners in the North and South of England. Mr. Gales was a brother of Sir Henry Gales, the railway engineer and bridge builder. Another distinguished member, the Rt. Hon. W. R. Warren, V.P., who when attending the Imperial Conference in 1923 as Prime Minister of Newfoundland, made considerable use of his membership and showed great interest in and acquaintance with the lesser known poets of to-day, died in January.

We are much interested to hear that a considerable sale in unusual quarters, including tube bookstalls, has followed our review of "a distinguished long poem," *Prometheus in Piccadilly*.

The authoritative articles by the erudite Rector of the National University of Greece, which remind us that there is modern as well as classical Greek poetry, give us occasion to mention that a devoted *Poetry Reviewer*, the Rev. D. R. Fotheringham, M.A., hon. secretary of the Byron Society, published some years ago a collection of modern Hellenic poems and war songs that breathe the lofty and unquenchable spirit of the land which "gave the modern world its intellect and helped, by an age-long sacrifice, to keep its soul alive."

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The Annual General Business Meeting of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) will be held at the offices of the Society, 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on Friday, May 4th, 1928, at 4.30 p.m., to receive the annual financial statement and elect the seven elected members of the General Council.

Names of delegates representing Centres should be sent to the General Secretary not later than April 6th.

Any member who wishes to bring any proposal before the Annual Meeting must give 28 days' written notice thereof to the General Secretary. Nominations for membership of the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members 28 days prior to the meeting.

By order of the Council, Feb. 3rd, 1928.

E. WELCH,
General Secretary.

CHILD OF MINE

CHILD of mine, hereafter,
When your laughter
Echoes in the mind
Like light resolved
To music, I will find
Guerdon of bliss
In such a kiss
As you were wont to give,
Happy that I may live
In dreams with you,
Now dreams are due,
Child of mine.

ALLEN BROCKINGTON.

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL COMPETITIONS FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS.

THE POETRY REVIEW offers, in memory of Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, two of the famous Lucchesi busts of Tennyson for awards to the schools submitting (*a*) the best collection of poems by pupils, and (*b*) the best selection of poems by local poets, known and unknown, or descriptive of the town or county in which the school is located.

In addition, book prizes at the adjudicator's discretion, including copies of Harrap's "Poetry and Life Series," will be given in three classes for the best individual poems received from young people under 13 and from 13 to 17. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any one competitor, and each MS. must bear the name and address of the writer, and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school or teacher a special additional prize or prizes may be awarded, thus constituting a competition within the major general contest. All MSS. should be addressed to the Young People's Editor THE POETRY REVIEW, 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before March 31st. Personal criticism of MSS. can only be given on payment of a fee of 5s. Several poems may be sent by teachers and others for a private opinion for this fee.

Similarly, individual book prizes will be given for the best individual lists of not more than ten poems within the above category (*b*). These individual selections may include both types of poems—poems by local writers and about the locality. We hope to encourage literary research among young people and the cultivation of taste and judgment in poetry and interest in its local manifestation and application. Competitors may define their area—urban or county—and this limitation should be stated at the head of the lists sent in. Address and closing date as above. It is intended to repeat these competitions each term.